

THE ELEMENTARY ENGLISH REVIEW

VOLUME 1

APRIL 1924

NUMBER 2

WHAT CHILDREN READ AT HOME

CLARISSA MURDOCH
(Mrs. Geo. W.)

Last summer I asked an intelligent young carpenter to build me some open bookshelves.

"Bookshelves," said he, "What do you want with bookshelves? No one builds them nowadays. Ten years ago they did, but now they aren't stylish. What's the use of owning books with branch libraries all over town? Anyway no one reads much these days; there're so many movies."

To one brought up in the old time cultural atmosphere such a statement was truly startling.

It was my great good fortune to be one of seven children in a minister's family where worldly goods were few, but where the one luxury was books. We were blessed with a devoted mother who liked to read aloud. It was long before movies and automobiles and, as we lived in a rigorous climate, there were many long evenings with few outside entertainments. Our one great diversion was first hearing Mother read then later, reading for ourselves.

As it was a minister's family, there was much reading of the Bible and those children, now grown, have a precious heritage in

the memory of their father's beautiful voice reading such majestic psalms as, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help."

But it was Mother who did most of the reading and it was mainly from the English classics, with much emphasis on poetry. For some reason *The Cotter's Saturday Night* was a favorite, though it must have been beyond the comprehension of some of the group. The tired, patient mother used to try skipping parts, but a *five year old* could always detect the skips and would make her go back.

Longfellow was at the height of his popularity and made a great impression upon one *ten year old*. She knew pages by heart. A much younger sister told her, years later, that she had often lain terrified in her bed at night while the poetry lover had insisted upon quoting to her in solemn tones *The Afternoon in February*, reaching a terrifying climax in,

"While through the meadows,
Like fearful shadows
Slowly passes
A funeral train."

Children are such funny little creatures no one knows what is going to make the strongest appeal.

Some of the children liked Scott and Dickens; though as they came in "assorted sizes" the wee ones were not as enthusiastic as the others, but they fell so completely under the spell of enchantment woven by the reading that they did not confess till they were grown that characters like *Quilp* "scared them to death." That was before the present day knowledge of child psychology.

Coming from this environment, it is not strange that we often have books in every room of our house, including the kitchen, and these not cook-books either. Frequently on my daily round of "picking up" I have rescued the baby's "Peter Rabbit" from the basement and "Popular Mechanics" from the high-school boy's bed, where he left it so it would be handy if he wakened before the folks. Under the circumstances new bookshelves are sometimes necessary.

Is such a book loving family unusual or is the carpenter right and do most people now have no room or time for books? If there was anything valuable in this old time reading, can we save any of it for our children? If you want to know what an idealist thinks of its value, read Dallas Lore Sharp's most suggestive and helpful article on *Education for Individuality*. But at the same time remember that his boys are now grown and that even then, years ago, to give them this training they had to leave Boston and go to live in Hingham. It is not possible for all of us to turn our backs on city life, where there are many outside interests, some of them valuable. The child in today's platoon school has far greater mental stimulation than the one in the old fashioned school. There are also movies, automobiles, Boy Scout and Camp Fire Girl activities, summer camps, and winter sports carnivals. Not only is the child's time more limited, but father with his golf and mother with clubs and bridge see far less of their children than did the old time parents.

But when people say they have no time to read to their children it always brings to mind President Roosevelt and his devotion to his boys. Surely he was as busy as the average father, yet he found time for weekly letter writing, pillow fights, and reading when he substituted for the mother in the after supper reading hour.

What can a young mother with limited time do to start her children along the right path? Begin with *Mother Goose*. It is the child's gateway to good literature. A New York teacher recently wrote an article decrying *Mother Goose* on the ground that the jingles are nothing but doggerel and political lampoons and are not fit for a child. On the other hand Richard Le Gallienne in an essay in *Harper's* several years ago paid tribute to its value. He said one reason for its universal appeal is that the rhymes treat of elemental desires, such as for food and drink. This frequent mention of food is characteristic of all folk stories. A very young child appreciates, "Polly, put the kettle on, we'll all take tea," or "Feed upon strawberries, sugar and cream."

These jingles develop the sense of rhythm, as any baby "patty-caking" will demonstrate. The child's sense of humor is also stimulated. Another result of much repetition of such verses is that children unconsciously develop the ability to quote, and literary allusion certainly makes conversation more interesting. A mere baby, while dressing, said to her mother,

"I'm Deedle, deedle Dumpling,
My son John,
One shoe off, and one shoe on."

Another on a foggy day exclaimed, "One misty, moisty morning, when cloudy was the weather," and on a snowy day, "Now the hills are covered with snow and winter's now come fairly."

A taste for the musical is created. Children often make their own jingles, trying out rhymes, discarding some and keeping others. This is often their first effort to discriminate between words.

The Volland edition of *Mother Goose* is particularly good for the younger children because Frederick Richardson's beautiful pictures exactly catch the English atmosphere. There is a very complete edition with seven hundred rhymes by William Donahey, *The Teenie Weenie Man*.

In My Nursery by Laura E. Richards is welcome to children leaving *Mother Goose*. Theodore Roosevelt mentioned this little volume in his autobiography and many mothers, who thus became acquainted with it, have used it with pleasure.

Soon the child will be ready for *Child's Garden of Verses*, Field's *Lullabyland*, Lear's *Nonsense Books* and then poetry of a higher type.

Good short stories for children too young for sustained interest are found in Sara Cone Bryant's *Best Stories to Tell Children* and Caroline Sherwin Bailey's *The Story Hour*.

Then in rapid succession will come fairy stories, Bible hero stories, Kipling's *Just So Stories* and *Jungle Books*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Arabian Nights*, and similar tales. A recent addition to this class of books is Carl Sandburg's delightful *Rootabaga Stories*. These books are all valuable because they develop the imagination and feeling.

Little children turn eagerly to stories about children of other lands, among which the best beloved are the Eskimos. The National Geographic Society has published a splendid loose-leaf geography, *Eskimo Life*. In connection with this, they will enjoy *Snow Baby* by Mrs. Josephine Peary. Other stories with a similar appeal are *Nurenberg Stove*, *Pinnochio*, the *Story of a Puppet*, *Heidi*, *Moni*, the *Goat Boy* and *Hans Brinker*, a favorite of two generations of children.

There is another class of books that is important, the *bird* and *flower books*. These aid the child in understanding the outdoors. While they are *fact books*, they lead to the reading of such writers as John Burroughs. *How to Know the Wild Flowers*

is good for a beginning, because the flowers are classified by color. Nellie Blanchan Doubleday's *Bird Neighbors* is arranged on a similar plan. The National Geographic Society has a bird book with the birds in color. One little girl made her own book from an old copy of this and when she was five she knew forty-five birds. One day she came running in exclaiming, "Mother, I need your big bird book, quick, there's a bird sitting on the fence and it isn't in my book." Even a young child will learn in this way to use reference books as a matter of course.

Having awakened the children's interest by reading to them, the rest is simple, for they will read what you suggest and provide. You will not have to force them to read if you have in their way books of sufficient appeal. At first, they will read many of the stories that Mother has read. Soon they will attempt new ones. Let them try whatever they choose. One eight year old boy selected as his first effort an unabridged edition of *Arabian Nights*. He would read two or three words and then spell a word for his mother to pronounce. In this laborious manner he finished the book and then started over again. Its battered condition speaks eloquently of how it was beloved. A big boy now, he told me the other day that he did not know why he liked it so well, as he did not understand it all, but an adult realizes that it was the glamour of romance making its first appeal.

Good editions, well illustrated, will be much used. What if they do become soiled? A book in the hands of an eager little-reader is better than two on the shelf.

For boys who have mastered the technique of reading, there is a long list of books, among which are: *Robin Hood*, *Ivanhoe*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Treasure Island*, *Captains Courageous*, *Call of the Wild*, *Tom Sawyer*, *Huckleberry Finn*, *The Pilot*, and *Two Years Before the Mast*. After these, they usually read stories of exploration, big game hunting, and often biography, if there is sufficient

(Continued on page 75.)



For the children

TO THE CHILDREN:

There seems to be a blissful delusion, which means a hope based upon minus zero, that it is not necessary to learn English in school because "we speak it anyway." Algebra and chemistry and Greek (but who would think of learning Greek nowadays?) have to be learned. French has to be learned and you have to write *je suis, tu es, il est* and *j'avais eu, tu avais eu, il avait eu* a couple of thousand times before your clumsy brains begin to grasp their meaning and your slow vocal cords will utter the right sound, more or less, at the right moment. But why learn English with dreary exercises when you hear it spoken in the street and have heard it spoken in the street ever since the beginning of time, which, in your case, means ever since you first remember to have been taken to the circus?

In the first place the English you hear in the streets of our polyglot cities (now if only you had learned Greek you would not be obliged to look it up in Webster!)—the English, as I said, of our cities is as pure as the Chicago River in the muddy season. In the olden days (at least so it seems to me from a careful perusal of many learned volumes upon the subject) the newcomer arrived with his luggage firmly tied in a handkerchief and clasped in one hand while the other hand turned the pages of an English grammar. That does not mean that English is a better language than French or German or Russian or Yiddish or Turkish or even Dutch. It simply means that English is the language which happens to be spoken here and which prospective citizens (for their own convenience and for that of their neighbors) ought to learn before they buy a seat on the Stock Exchange or buy a couple of newspapers and generally set out to make themselves rich and famous. And this seems to have been the pleasing habit of the immigrant of a couple of centuries ago.

Of course when people came by the boatload and populated entire regions with Germans or Frenchmen this was not so easy. But in that case the average child learned both the native language and English and was taught a decent respect for the tongue of his adopted country. Nowadays, we live in a world in which the principle of "well, I got by anyway" is too popular for the comfort of many of us. And English is merrily neglected because so-and-so "got by" and he can not speak three words of English without indulging in *six* mistakes.

All of which is true—but true only up to a certain point. Beyond that point there waits a large big vacuum for Mr. So-and-so (who always "got by" with his slipshod sentences). When he tries to rise into an atmosphere where correct English is *Article I* of the *Law of Social Decency* he will find that his feeble little motor can not carry him any further, goes dead on him and lands him with a loud, resounding whack into the swamp where dwell the worshippers of the *Golden Calf* which brays "just get by, boys. Just get by and never mind how."

So much for the practical aspect of the question. But as long as you learn English

why not learn it well? This sounds Sunday-schooly and preachy but why bungle a job which is really a very fascinating one, as soon as you have learned to handle your tools.

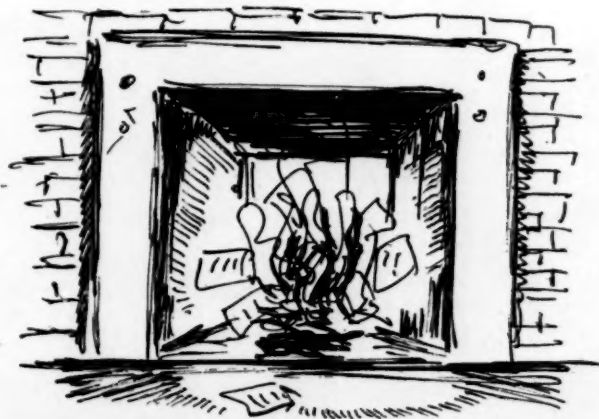
Your tools are words. If you think that you can learn them without a grammar, try it. Some people manage to get from New York to San Francisco without once consulting a time-table. But they spend an awful lot of time waiting in railroad-stations and sometimes they land in Quebec or in Mobile when they ought to have been in Omaha to make connections. Again if you think—and the thought is not uncommon—that as soon as you are familiar with words you can juggle them and get them into their right positions without an everlasting effort, an effort repeated day after day and sometimes hour after hour, try it.

There are schools which advertise that they can teach you the violin without effort and in ten lessons. A normal fiddler who does not want to bring the police down upon the block in which he practices, expects to play scales for some ten or eleven years before he dares to show himself and his instrument in public. You will find in the advertising-pages of the magazines alluring bits of information which ask you to "copy this sketch and learn to draw in three weeks." Most artists I have known assure me that they will learn to make a perfect line the day before they die but only if they live to be as old as Rockefeller.

And it is the same with the English language. If you really want to learn to write, that is to say, if you really hope to say those things with words which Kreisler says with his violin—and that is the ideal after which we all strive who work in the sterile vineyard of literature—then you will have to do exactly what Kreisler did the first twenty years of his life, practise and study, play scales, play more scales, play scales backward and forward and continue to work, in loneliness and poverty until every idea becomes unconsciously changed into a concrete expression of something which pleases the audience and expresses exactly what the author (or the fiddler or the artist) has wanted to say.

And because this is such excellent advice I shall follow it myself and spend the rest of this evening making hash out of the last eighty pages of my new book, throw 24,000 words, the work of three weeks, into the paper-basket, and write them once more for no other reason than that I don't like them and feel that they ought to be rewritten. I shall hate myself for this courageous decision for it means a lot of work. Perhaps the paper-basket is too dangerous a graveyard. I might fish them out and let them go by. I will tell you what I will do. The fire is still burning.

There they go.



THE CORRELATION OF LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL SCIENCES IN INTERMEDIATE GRADES

MABEL SNEDAKER

University of Iowa

A peculiarly helpful relationship exists between language and the social sciences in intermediate grades. This relationship is found in the opportunity for both oral and written expression offered, first, by the socialized recitation in geography, history and civics; second, by the wide variety of live topics for both oral and written English which constantly present themselves in social science recitations. An examination of the objectives of language teaching shows the basis of this relationship. Clearness and fluency in oral and written expression are generally accepted as the chief objectives of language teaching. Mahoney¹ states as the aim of his course in English for elementary schools:

1. To graduate pupils able to talk or recite for a few minutes in an interesting way, using clean-cut sentences and good enunciation.

2. To graduate pupils able to write an interesting paragraph of clean-cut sentences, unmarked by misspelled words and by common grammatical errors.

In order to achieve these objectives, clearness and fluency, it is essential that the pupil see some purpose in talking or in writing. He will not see this purpose unless his subject is one upon which he has something to say which he feels is worth while. Such a subject will be closely related to the pupil's experience, narrow in scope, and capable of definite treatment. The failure to provide subjects which answer these requirements is a common cause of poor language work. The teacher attempts to stimulate the child's interest in topics with which he is not immediately concerned. Even though the subject is one which the child is eager to bring to the attention of his class-mates, in a great many instances

the results secured are poor in quality because this subject is not capable of definite treatment; the child is unable to organize the imaginative details involved. Topics which depend largely upon the imagination for development, work havoc in the language habits of intermediate grade children. Lack of definite knowledge upon the subject, results in a loose organization in which "and" and "then" become prominent factors. For this reason it seems best to confine oral and written language work in these grades largely to *factual* subjects, which are narrow in scope and well within the range of the pupil's knowledge and interest. Such factual subjects may be had in abundance. The social sciences, as presented in the socialized recitation, offer a field rich in factual material which possesses all the characteristics of good language subjects.

Oral language is particularly well served by the social sciences. This service is rendered not only through the creation of a broad field of interests from which good language subjects may be drawn, but also through the constant practice in talking clearly, briefly, and to the point, which is necessary to the socialized recitation. The very nature of the socialized recitation provides many of those factors essential to good oral English. A summary of these factors in the socialized recitation shows its value in teaching children to talk well.

First, a socialized recitation is a real audience situation of "pupil talking" and "audience listening." The pupil is presenting points which he thinks are important to an understanding of the problem upon which the class is working. Often, he

¹ Mahoney, John J.: Standards in English. World Book Co., 1924.

is presenting points from reference material which no one else in the class has had an opportunity to use. He feels that what he has to say is needed in the solution of the problem.

Second, the subject is alive to the pupil because he is working on a problem which he has helped to state and whose worth he appreciates. For instance, a class, in studying our trade relations with Europe, find that we import annually over thirty million dollars' worth of cotton cloth from England. A previous study of cotton has shown the class that England imports most of its raw cotton from the United States. They at once raise the problem, "Why can England which produces no raw cotton sell manufactured cotton to the United States at a profit?" There is no doubt about such a problem's being alive to the pupils.

Third, in the socialized recitation there is a constant urge to organize. The pupil must give points bearing on the problem, not irrelative material. Furthermore, a pupil reporting points which others do not have, feels responsible for giving this material in such a way that all may understand and remember it. The necessity for presenting his points in concise, clear-cut sentences, and for making his report logical and complete, is real to the pupil who knows that he will be questioned by the class until he has made himself clear. Indeed, the class in getting a piece of work done, soon recognizes the importance of organization and are quick to offer suggestions for a better organization. In a friendly spirit, and out of a genuine desire to help, a pupil may say, "I think I can make that point clearer," and offer his organization for the consideration of the class. An attitude of intolerance for carelessly organized work becomes manifest in such a class. Such criticisms as "I think John ought not to take the time of the class with that material until he has it in better shape," or, "Wouldn't it be better for John to do more work on this point and report tomorrow," are heard. The importance of organization becomes apparent to the pupil not only in the report but also in

the project which is often a part of a socialized recitation. This project may be the making of paper, the making of hominy, the building of a flatboat, the dyeing of cloth, or any other concrete activity which helps in understanding the problem. Exactness and sequence in giving directions become necessary if the class is to be directed in constructing something by a pupil who has mastered the method. In building a miniature section of paved road as the first paved roads of the Turnpike Era were built, one step must follow another in logical order.

Fourth, the friendly give and take of class discussion in the socialized recitation helps to eliminate self-consciousness. The questions asked by the class spring from a real desire to know. The fact that he has definite knowledge upon these questions gives the child confidence. The whole attitude of trying to accomplish a job with the least possible waste of time, which characterizes the successful socialized recitation, tends to eliminate self-consciousness.

Fifth, the value of concrete illustrations and concrete details in making a point clear to others is realized by the child. He soon learns, for instance, that statistics reported in millions of dollars make little impression on the class, that he must reduce his numbers to fractions or per cent or to "times as much" if they are to be remembered.

Sixth, the importance of making the explanatory or demonstration talks with which he illustrates his work, clear, definite, and pointed is felt by the child. He learns to begin the explanation of a graph or chart with a statement of the point he is making from the chart. He learns that it is better to say, "This graph of our exports of raw materials to Canada in 1919 shows that coal is by far our most important export to Canada," than it is to say, as is so often done, "Here is a graph of our exports of raw materials to Canada in 1919." He learns to demonstrate carefully, step by step, how results were obtained in individual experiments.

Seventh, the pupil's real interest in making

his fellow pupils hear, aids in improving mechanics, such as enunciation and voice inflection. Moreover, the class, who insist on being made to hear, bring a much greater pressure to bear upon the child who mumbles than the teacher possibly can. Again, the child takes the trouble to look up the pronunciation of proper names when he alone is responsible for a report.

The factors just summarized as encouraging good English in the socialized recitation in social science are found in the recitation in oral language when the talks are upon topics growing out of the study of social problems. These topics are of two general types. In the first place, many points of interest to the children, but too numerous to handle as a part of the study of the problem, arise during the socialized recitation in geography, history, or civics. These form the basis for talks in the oral English period. A topic of this type is usually suggested in somewhat the following fashion: A class studying our imports of hides and skins from Latin America, finds that hides are listed as "dry" and as "green or pickled." The question as to just what is meant by these terms is at once raised, and a member of the class volunteers to find out and report in the next oral English period. Such a report has the same incentives to good oral expression as the reports of the socialized recitation.

The second type of topic growing out of the study of social problems has to do with the projects which help to make these problems concrete. Talks based on projects are by far the most valuable type of oral language work, not only for intermediate grades but for primary grades. A child who has helped to carry a project to completion step by step, has little trouble in securing clearness and unity in a talk explaining how the project was carried out. To cite an example: a fifth-grade child in telling the children of other grades, during an assembly program, how the fifth grade made paper, explains the steps in the process of making paper, one after the other. Having taken a hand in making the paper, he

sees no other way of describing the process than in its natural sequence. The organization of the talk presents no difficulties. The child does not flounder through a mass of imaginative details, he knows exactly what he wants to say next. Therefore, the loose "and" and "then" are not apt to creep into his talk. The child uses a far more extensive vocabulary in explaining how paper is made than he would in telling a story or in giving an original description. He has broadened his vocabulary through wide reading on the subject, and often through meeting new terms in handling the materials of the project. On the whole, talks based on projects seem possessed of a magic which smoothes out the difficulties in the paths of young speakers.

These two general types of topics from the social sciences furnish plenty of material to keep everybody busy. Indeed, it is an exceptional recitation in which several subjects about which the class feels the need of further knowledge, do not arise. A few illustrations of such subjects follow. These are merely random samples, and by no means represent all the topics carried over to the oral language period during the study of problems under the units cited.

Geography of Europe. Grade 6.

Types of imported cotton cloth found in Iowa City stores.

The Jacquard Loom.

How sole leather is tanned.

Geography of Clothing. Grade 4.

How we washed and carded wool.

How we spun this wool into thread.

History of Recreational Activities. Grade 6.

Games played in Old England on Robin Hood's Day.

The beginnings of football.

Geography of Forest Industries and Products. Grade 5.

How a chair is made in Iowa City's chair factory.

The maple sugar I made.

History of Agriculture. Grade 5.

How we made a rag doll tester.

Geography of Fuel and Power. Grade 5.

Current prices of coal in Iowa City.

How We Are Fed. Grade 4.

Some by-products of corn that will surprise you.

History of Transportation. Grade 4.

How I built this flatboat.

The need of milestones and guide-posts in colonial days.

Tavern signs.

Pack horse transportation:

1. Kinds of products brought to market by pack horses.
2. The products for which these were exchanged.
3. The journey of a pack horse caravan from the back woods to the settlement.

The Conestoga Wagon:

1. Description of a Conestoga wagon and of the horses.
2. The teamsters and how they traveled.
3. Customs of the road.
4. The Conestoga wagon in time of war.

Geography, History and Civics of the Fishing Industry.
Grade 4.

The following talks were given in a single oral language period:

1. Our visit to a professional fisherman.
2. Kind of fish found in the Iowa river.
3. Fish and game laws which fishermen in Johnson County must observe.
4. Labels on fish foods.

5. The world's fish foods.
6. Eat more fish.
7. By-products of the fishing industry.
8. Hardships suffered by fishermen.
9. Methods of fishing.
10. Good sportsmanship in fishing.
11. Books on the fishing industry.

In addition to individual talks, report, on which the whole class collaborate, grow out of social science recitations. Excursions such as "Our Visit to a Lumber Yard," and "How Gloves Are Made in Iowa City's Glove Factory," are reported in this manner. However, the most valuable exercise of this kind, from the standpoint of oral language training, is the report of a problem or a project for an *assembly period*.

(To be concluded in the May number.)

OBJECTIVES IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ENGLISH*

ESTALINE WILSON

Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Toledo, Ohio

The last issue of the Ohio Educational Research Bulletin contains this S. O. S. call from a superintendent:

"Inasmuch as our work in English, both from the viewpoint of composition and literature, does not seem to be functioning, I had hoped that same subject in this field might be taken up and developed throughout the year."

The Bureau replies that the need for investigations of this sort is very apparent, and the Bureau will be glad to receive any suggestions which will make for better English instruction.

Such a request and such a reply suggests the old gopher story. A father was traveling over the western prairie with the traditionally inquisitive son, who inquired about one of the gopher holes which seem to grow out of the ground with no evidence of excavation dirt at the entrance. The father answered that the gopher began at the

bottom and dug upward. The boy then asked how the gopher got to the bottom of the hole before it was dug, and what he did with the dirt after he made the hole. The father replied, "That's the gopher's business, not mine." Just so nonchalantly the Ohio Educational Research Bulletin puts the responsibility on the Ohio teachers of English. But the request and the reply are also distinctly suggestive of the futility of the struggle of the English teachers. What is it that we have been trying to do in English?

In the past, the objective has been to make of pupils amateur literary producers rather than to equip them with effective English forms with which to meet adequately the simpler needs of everyday living. We have come now to recognize the folly of training elementary and high-school pupils in what is really a vocational field. But what are these everyday English needs which constantly confront the pupils? Some

*Read before the National Council of Teachers of English, November 1923.

helpful suggestions for an answer to this query may be found in the procedure whereby teachers have set to work to analyze community activities and needs in order to establish objectives in the various fields of education. Perhaps the best illustration of this process may be found in Mr. Bobbit's report of the work done in Los Angeles under his direction.

For example, there are 50 objectives set up in the field of physical efficiency. They are of this type:

- a. Ability to make one's food contribute to physical wellbeing.
- b. Ability to make one's sleep contribute to well being.
- c. Ability to keep body properly oxygenated.
- d. Ability to secure the variety of physical experiences needed for well being.
- e. Ability to care for teeth.
- f. Ability to care for eyes.
- g. Ability to care for skin.

These are closely related needs, yet it is true each has its particular technique. One may be careful of the teeth, and carelessly ignorant about care of eyes, argues the doctor.

Again, in the field labeled unspecialized practical labors, there are listed 375 different abilities from which it is suggested each individual should select the objectives appropriate to his needs.

Those objectives are of this sort:

- a. Doing simple painting, varnishing, whitewashing, etc.
- b. Caring for paint brushes.
- c. Putting up window shades.
- d. Replacing shades on rollers.
- e. Renewing washers on water faucets, and so on for over 300 very specific uses for many of which it is the business of the school to train.

Note the objectives given under social contacts and relationships:

- a. Ability and disposition to conduct one's social affairs so as to avoid being disagreeable to others,
- b. Ability to gain the confidence of those with whom one comes in contact.
- c. Ability to converse agreeably and effectively upon a great variety of topics,
- d. Ability to tell interesting stories interestingly.
- e. Ability to refrain from conversation disagreeable to others.
- f. Ability to draw out the conversational powers of others.

In the field of leisure occupations the objectives are again quite definite in form:

- a. Ability to dance.
- b. Ability to entertain one's friends, family and social correspondence.
- c. Ability to swim.
- d. Ability to ride horseback.
- e. Ability to play golf, etc.
- f. Ability to receive and impart instruction for the acquisition of these skills.

We don't in physical education teach muscular co-ordination and say, "Now you will be a good golf player and a good dancer." We provide for specific skills.

In every one of these fields it seems fairly easy to spot the specific needs of an individual and to suggest ample and specific procedure of supplying these wants.

But when the English teachers of Los Angeles came to list the objectives of social intercommunication in what we call "English," the tendency was to do what we always seem to do in English, namely, to swing back to general objectives such as:

- a. Ability to use the voice agreeably.
- b. Ability to prepare an outline.
- c. Ability to present one's thoughts orally.
- d. Ability to use English which is correct.
- e. Ability to write a letter according to the forms in use.

Such English objectives are too general and for that reason fail to function. Why is it that in fields such as physical efficiency, unspecialized labor, civic duties, social contacts and the like, objectives are more specific and numerous than in a field which is broader than all the others combined, which pervades and colors all the others, which begins the minute we waken in the morning and is ever present until we go to sleep at night.

Such obvious needs as those of English are, of course, the most difficult to analyze. Then too, the traditional thinking and the traditional methods in English prevent any very positive departure from time tested procedures. The human mind reluctantly concedes that what has been may be wrong. The old Common Law adage, "Possession is nine out of ten points in law," grows out of a race's instinctive clinging to what is established.

Professional pride of English teachers induces them always to hope and often to

contend that what has been must be right. At any rate they are inclined to assume that it is right, and put the responsibility of the proof that it is wrong upon those who as reformers are remaking the curriculum. But many teachers of English are not willing to make a case against themselves. Even though college professors in Indiana University have prescribed the methods of instruction in highschool English in that state for a quarter of a century, nevertheless a recent study conducted by the department of English in the State University of Indiana, has demonstrated that half of the freshmen that come to the University are unable to write a single paragraph which will stand the test of any literary standards whatever.

Prof. Lonsberry concedes that the prevailing methods of English instruction in colleges have failed in the announced objective—that of developing the necessary skills for literary production. And so there are those who say why not abandon the English classes, and, in the history, in the science, and in the other departments teach the simple everyday English there needed. Why should students scramble about for theme subjects when they cannot effectively express the ideas that they have?

Some such plan might work, but incidental teaching is always a risk. Teachers of all subjects have their minds fixed upon attaining their own direct objectives and are not intent upon cultivating skill in language expression as a by-product.

When we arrive at the Utopia which Wells in his "Men Like Gods" describes, where one mind thinks thoughts and another receives them by a sort of mental wireless telegraphy without the use of language medium, then the English teacher may abandon her hopeless labor and thankfully give up the ghost. But, in the meantime, there is no such Utopia, and the English teacher may not, as Wells did, merely create one by a broad sweep of an unbridled imagination.

If the struggle then must go on, how can the English teacher find suitable objectives?

As a first step, why not forget all the old nomenclature in the course of study and along with it the traditional objectives which the mere term *English* suggests and which teachers revere? Why not forget themes, paragraphs and compositions? Why not begin to think in terms of training in the language techniques which the pupil needs to make his social contacts both in school and in social and civic obligations? Teachers may then be able to get away from the artificial, inadequate procedures. Today we write descriptions of "How the city looks at night", and tomorrow we make up a story of "A trip to the moon." Every fall there is "How I spent my vacation," and Thanksgiving week, millions of school children are compelled to reincarnate the Pilgrim Fathers with their pens, and make the turkey stride and strut with their brushes, but few of them will be permitted to eat him, as the price is prohibitive to more than ninety per cent. In real life the turkey is coming to be a rare luxury, but in school he is produced every year more and more prolifically, and shares with the extinct Pilgrim the distinguished honor of being the motivating factor of three weeks of "live language lessons." How many children really made use of these stories on Thanksgiving? If they told stories, were they these stories? What English did they really need for Thanksgiving?

If English teachers are ready to forget the old term, Language Lessons or English Instructions with their unattainable objectives, and are willing to develop and train for necessary language skills which may enable the pupil to meet the language demands in all school subjects and in all the affairs of everyday living where "what to say" and "how to say it" are essential, the problem becomes one of deciding what are the specific language needs of the pupil and what degree of proficiency in language must he attain in order to meet satisfactorily these needs.

Suppose we begin with the assumption that English is to function in all school work. It is not enough to say that

children must use good language forms in all their school work, and that all teachers must correct language errors. We must get back to the specific skills necessary in such occurrences as:

1. A question must be so formulated that it stimulates a good answer.
What standards must be applied to make it come up to this expectation?
What are the standards by which the answer should be judged?
What are the special skills of answering clearly and concisely?
2. Just what specific skills are necessary in a biographical report in history in order that the stereotyped *born, married, died* notations may be prevented and the desired standards attained?
3. How can geography reports on industries be better organized by use of the question outline?
4. What ideas in geography are best communicated by means of graphs?
5. What is the correct way to write a bibliography for reference reading done in history.
6. What sort of notes should be included on a card catalog of library books?

In addition to such a list of the uses of English in connection with the school subjects, there will arise informal situations. Here are some sent in by the Toledo teachers, who are making collections of specific English needs found in school activities:

Mr. Lathrop, the Postmaster, visited a civics club. Some of the children who knew him were asked to describe him so that the president of the club who was to call for him would recognize him. The boy must introduce himself to Mr. Lathrop and must also introduce Mr. Lathrop to the class. The class must show appreciation of the Postmaster's talk.

What does one say in introducing himself?

What does one say in introducing a person to the class?

How can a group express appreciation?

Standards for all such specific uses must be established that an acceptable degree of proficiency may be achieved. Standards, yes and practice beforehand as well, for the schools are places in which to practice. When real situations occur, it is oftentimes too late.

An officer of the class club wished to resign her post. How does one write a letter of resignation gracefully?

Letter writing situations are usually recognized by teachers and used, though children in school are still writing letters to their mothers whom they will be talking with in the next half hour.

An explanation and apology must be made by the class representative to the minister of the church

across the way. Pupils plan what one might say in such a situation.

A third grade class in one school writes directions telling how they made clay plates so that the pupils in another school may read them and do the same thing.

Pupils call up on telephone and arrange for the class to attend a certain motion picture.

Pupils plan the approach they will make in selling tickets for school entertainments, where the technique of selling is less important than the technique of not making one's self a nuisance.

When to school situations are added all the out-of-school English situations, for which it is the business of the school to train, where would the course of study end? One must know the English with which to meet the amenities of life, he must be able to discuss questions in club and home. He meets his fellows in a thousand business relations; he must make peace with the traffic policeman; he must make talks at teachers' associations. What is to limit the lessons which the teacher of English will want to have? Once she is free to forget paragraphs and think of the needs one has for English, situations will crowd themselves upon her until she is flooded with ideas for making English function.

But alas, when the teacher is confronted with the task of establishing definite standards whereby people may improve the effectiveness of their speech, the undertaking seems too difficult. Either she has not the time or she has not the insight, so she falls back on familiar standbys, such as reproducing Christmas stories, or preparing descriptions of Madonnas.

Leaders among teachers of English who have broad experience and skill in analyzing needs must turn from the *traditional* objectives labeled *English* and begin to search other fields of activity, for example, those which provide appropriate training for better civic and social relationships, to find new English objectives. Objectives should be sought which do not vainly attempt year after year to make all pupils literary producers. Objectives should be defined which recognize that knowing *what to say* and *how to say it* is dependent not only upon a heart which is in the right place, but also upon a tongue which is trained.

CLASS WORK IN CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM OF ORAL AND WRITTEN COMPOSITION

FRANCES JENKINS

Assistant Professor of Education, College of Education, University of Cincinnati

"Why do we have a holiday tomorrow?" asked the first grade teacher.

"I know," volunteered a sturdy youngster, proud of his knowledge. "Mother told me. It's because America discovered Columbus."

We may laugh at the confusion of associations which brought the unexpected answer, but does not reflection show that there is a sense in which the child was right. Did not America discover Columbus? To what other country does Columbus stand for the idealism which pushes on to success in the face of overwhelming difficulties? What other nation celebrates Columbus Day?

Some such reversal of attitude I wish to advocate today toward those limitations in the use of English by pupils in elementary school, secondary school, and college, which have overwhelmed the teacher ever since the teaching of English composition began to be taken seriously. It is because of these limitations that we have had *the reign of red ink*, the overworked teacher of English, and finally the plea for the laboratory method of teaching English.

Our thought has been, "The pupils' errors are the main hindrance to class growth"; it should be, "The pupils' errors are among the main opportunities for class growth." In other words, we need to understand more intelligently the significance of the errors made by pupils, and to relate them to the successes achieved by these same pupils. At present in judging results, the tendency seems to be to give the error overweight, the success underweight, and to neglect possible relationships between the two. We need also to examine the teaching activities which are available for

attacking the sources of error, and to evolve a technic for handling results which shall ensure wise economy of time and effort. Then the red ink will cease to flow steadily throughout the year, and the laboratory method may prove to be unjustifiable in the teaching of English composition. The overworked teacher may even become extinct.

The technic of criticism should be built upon the principle that most criticisms of both oral and written work should be in the hands of the class. Only so may the matter be lifted into an impersonal place. A pupil may defy, resent, or grieve over the criticism of a teacher, but there is little ground for any of these attitudes when he has opportunity to defend himself in meeting the criticisms of his peers. Public opinion is a strong force, whether on the athletic field or in the schoolroom. We may well use it in the field of English.

The discussion or criticism of compositions may be carried on by the class as a whole under the guidance of the teacher; groups may work together; committees may be placed in charge of certain phases of the work; or each pupil may be given a companion to act as critic under given conditions.

An interesting plan is reported by J. C. Tressler of the Boys' High School in Brooklyn (*English Journal*, 1912, p. 405). Several days after a theme is written, each boy is given time to go over his own theme, credit being given for any corrections made. The theme is then given to the boy *opposite* for correction, the class being arranged in pairs for this purpose. A conference of the two is then permitted

for the sake of clearing up doubtful points. The next step is to pass the theme to class critics, and last of all it reaches the teacher. The boys take almost twice as long as English teachers in correcting the themes, but discover almost as many errors. The plan is described as "red blood versus red ink." Think of the growth those boys are getting in accomplishing this work, a much more important phase than the saving of the teacher's time and strength. A very sane discussion by Pendleton (Pendleton, C. S., *Composition as Communication*, Journal of Educational Method, Feb., 1923) provides for adequate remedial treatment on errors without over-emphasis.

The final criticism must always be the responsibility of the teacher, but it is likely to be much more effective if it comes as a *bit of companionship* in working toward higher standards than as the *judgment* of one far removed from the struggle in which the class is engaged.

A second important principle is that criticism should have a triple aspect. It should *test vitality*, *improve rhetorical expression*, and *correct technical errors* of construction, punctuation, spelling, in written work; of construction, pronunciation, and enunciation in oral composition.

The most precious ability in all English work is that of saying something worth while. Motivation of composition work, the selection of subjects which appeal to pupils' interests, and the careful work done in helping a pupil to make a worthy start, all help in developing this rare ability. Constructive criticism should train pupils to recognize vitality in one another's work, stamping approval upon each one's efforts in this line. There are pupils whose work will never rank high in the other phases under discussion who shine when vitality is taken as the test. Other pupils wax flowery in the use of words, and are painstaking in their mastery of punctuation marks, who, when weighed in this balance, are found wanting.

Improvement of the rhetorical expression found in young people's work offers a wide

field. The teacher who enjoys painting word pictures, who has a feeling for nicety of diction, who prides herself upon a forceful and pleasing organization of a paragraph, may be jealous of turning over to her class a share of the delight which comes in helping others to improve their crude expressions under her able direction. Class work in improving such sentences, however, shows a wealth of material in the contributions of other pupils, while recognition by class critics of the successful attempts in this line justifies the writers in their efforts.

Training in the recognition of good opening sentences, of closing sentences which really end a line of thought, of varied ways of beginning sentences, will go far in improving organization and getting rid of the "vain repetitions" which cause such sameness in written work.

But it is in the field of technical errors that most of the teacher's troubles lie. Inviting as are the discussions of vitality, of fitness and beauty, consciences have been over-developed in regard to errors in spelling, in punctuation, in construction, while the new field of oral work also overwhelms us with its technicalities. The papers gathered for use in making the Hillegas and the Harvard-Newton scales indicate that ability to handle these various complexities of the language grows with the ability to have something worth saying and the fluency which makes its expression pleasing. The use of these scales is one illustration of the growing tendency to consider a theme as a whole, only so will technical errors be seen in their true perspective.

With regard to technical errors, I wish to offer some definite suggestions which have proven helpful in simplifying the work of correction. They can be used by either teacher or class in making criticisms. While developed here for written work, they can be adapted to oral composition.

The sentence is taken as the measuring unit because it is a more economical measuring unit than any other that has been sug-

gested. Only in the *sentence relation* is construction clear, punctuation meaningful, word usage intelligent.

The sentences used by a pupil are of three types, so far as his mastery of technicalities is concerned. Each type needs a different kind of treatment from that given the other types. For convenience, I shall refer to them as A, B, and C sentences.

Sentence A, the correct sentence, is the sentence which shows mastery of form. It is correct in every detail—spelling, word usage, construction, punctuation, are all correct. It represents finality, perfection. No red ink can be used here in correcting technical errors. This type of sentence has never received its due. I would have attention centered upon it at times. Pupils should look for correct sentences in one another's papers. Teachers should occasionally grade a paper according to the proportion of correct sentences which it contains. Two sound psychological principles suggest the value of such treatment—the wisdom of centering attention upon the right form, and the tonic value of success.

Sentence B is the sentence which the pupil should be able to write correctly. It contains some errors which betoken carelessness or the failure of certain associations to reach the habit stage. If the same type of error is found in themes written by many pupils, drill is evidently needed. If the error is an occasional one, the pupil may be referred to the rule which he has violated. Some teachers use a symbol here which means, "This is an error which you can correct yourself." Deductive teaching is the type indicated here, the pupil has failed in his application of a rule which he understands. Only much practice makes such application automatic, so it is not strange that many sentences are of type B. Teachers should not be easily discouraged in dealing with these errors. It is important however, that steady, thorough following up of such errors be carried on.

A class was given a set of themes to examine to find (1) three punctuation marks

incorrectly used, (3) three punctuation marks omitted—the number of the rule involved being given in each case. The work proved profitable.

One teacher required pupils to copy each rule violated in sentences of type B. A boy who violated a given rule for the third time remarked, "Well, I guess it's up to me to learn that rule." Like another boy I knew, he might have testified, "I've always been around where they've been learning it, but somehow I've never learned it."

Sentence C is the type in which the pupil makes mistakes because he is struggling with an expression whose form he has not mastered. It is a question not for despair but for action. Here is where the teacher finds the problems which should be taken up in class lessons. Inductive teaching is indicated here. Just as sentence A represents mastery, finality, so sentence C indicates *need, futurity*.

Sentence building, using valuable fragments salvaged from these inchoate word masses, proves interesting and profitable. To leave pupils struggling without help week after week with sentences containing the same unmastered difficulties, shows poverty of teaching, inability to diagnose needs. For pupils to present themes consisting of too large a proportion of A sentences may mean that they have settled down upon a low plane of endeavor, explorations into new fields of English having ceased. The majority of papers will probably present sentences of all three types—sentences which show mastery of form, sentences which show incomplete mastery, and sentences which show struggle for expression.

There will be differences of opinion upon many points involved in criticism. Personally, I would advocate permitting some freedom in both spelling and punctuation, especially as pupils increase in maturity. What is important is that a pupil shall have authority for a given usage and get into the habit of holding to the usage which he selects. So long as our best publishers differ among themselves in these

matters, why should we not permit a pupil to select his own usage in cases where good authority upholds more than one. Such instances as the possessive form of a word ending in *s*, the use of the comma before *and* in a series, and the use of quotation marks when quoting a title in a sentence, are some of the points in question. I would urge the adoption of the simpler forms used by our better business houses—no periods after titles and headings, no punctuation marks on envelopes except periods after abbreviations, the omission of hyphens in many compound words. As rapidly as public sentiment will permit, simplified spelling should also be accepted. No one questions the twelve words accepted by the National Educational Association. The symbols used by printers in proofreading seem the logical symbols to use in denoting corrections in manuscript. That they can be used to advantage is unquestionable. Typewritten manuscripts should be welcomed.

Adequate class time must be given for constructive criticism, definite work should

be exacted. Rewriting of sentences, paragraphs, at times of the whole composition, should take the place of copying. The original manuscript should be more carefully preserved than the final copy; it marks growth more truly. Some system of tests should be used which will give the teacher opportunity to measure the growth of her class, the pupil to measure his own growth.

The constructive attitude, definite work towards results, standards of achievement for measuring results, are the essentials in intelligent criticism. Tom Sawyer did not whitewash the fence, he created an atmosphere which made whitewashing a privilege. When the day was over, Tom had had a good time and plenty of company, while the fence was resplendent with three coats of whitewash. May not the teacher of English find at her disposal in this work of criticism a force as powerful as that which Tom found. Let us hope that she may not only find it, but may also prove to be enough of a general to use it.

STAGE CRAFT FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

PART II

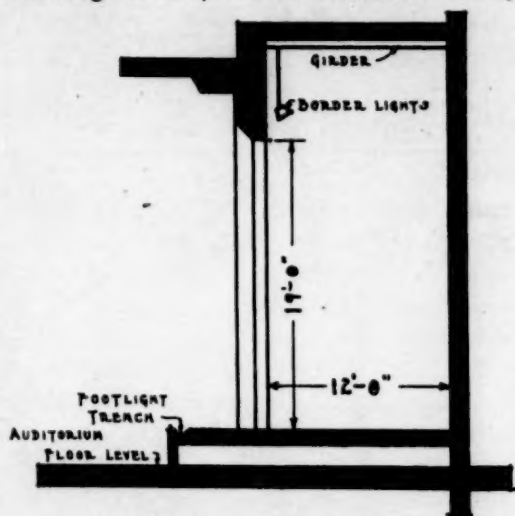
GEORGE STYLES

The first article of this series published in the preceding number of this magazine introduced the subject of Stage Craft for Elementary School Teachers and endeavored to deal with some of the problems which arise in the school activities and have to be overcome under the most handicapped circumstances. In that article the bare platform in an ordinary classroom was considered the only available stage and a few examples were given to show how it may be possible to present small productions under this handicap. This article will consider the more fortunate school with an auditorium, with a stage and a proscenium arch.

Play production today demands a frame around the pictures created upon the stage and it is certainly a great advantage to conceal the "mechanics" from the audience. In addition to the above, it will be assumed that the stage boasts footlights, border light and switchboard. This is a decided advance over the open platform, but is far from all the equipment needed to produce even a school play under what are considered ideal conditions. The plan and elevation Fig. 1 show the parts indicated in their usual locations; the dimensions are those generally used for an auditorium of 250 capacity.

Other illustrations are for scenes designed

for a stage of the same dimensions and conditions as shown in Fig. 1. With all the advantages shown on this plan the teacher assigned the task of producing the school play or other production is still handicapped. The stage is bare; there are no front curtain,



• SECTION THROUGH STAGE •

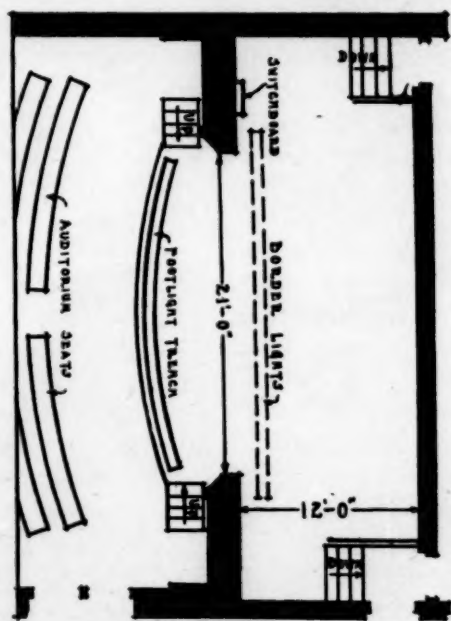


FIGURE 1

no settings, no properties. This is the situation to be covered in this article. The "friendly enemy," the blackboard is replaced usually by a blank plastered wall frequently decorated at the stage level by a large radiator.

The first question arising from the above is "What advantage has this situation over those already discussed?" In the first place the proscenium arch provides an opportunity completely to segregate the characters of the play from the audience. It furnishes a frame for the pictures presented upon the stage. These two facts are really a great asset when it is possible to avoid the distraction of the characters being in view of the audience before they actually take part in the play. In this situation the lights, footlights and overhead border light will play an important part, for they will have to serve as a front curtain, described later.

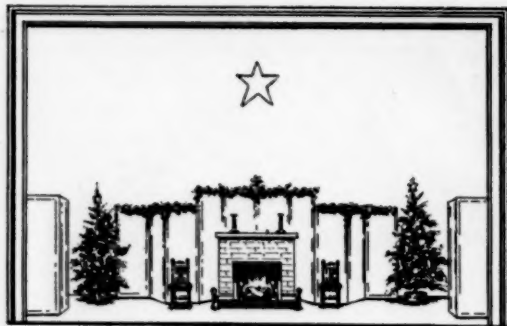
Plays, operettas and pageants requiring only one scene are a great advantage to the teacher who has to produce on such a poorly equipped stage; but there are times when two or more scenes are required. In such cases screens will be found of great service. The screens referred to are the humble three, four or five-fold variety consisting of wooden frames hinged together and covered with burlap or other cheap material. Some situations in which screens will serve were suggested in the preceding article but here they will be considered as scenery or backgrounds and for use as wings to cover the entrance and exits of characters in a play.

Purchase of screens or time spent in making them should not be considered wasted or just a temporary measure as the screens will be found useful to compose some parts of settings when other equipment is available. They may appear in *one hundred and one* other scenes and situations and with a little treatment will never be recognized by the most regular patron.

The easiest means to procure screens is to apply to the nearest furniture store and purchase the type and size which happen to be in stock and bearing the price tag suited to the funds available. This means may not secure just what is best suited to the requirements, but in any case inexpensive screens should be selected in order that they may be adapted to different situations with-

out the risk of ruining some expensive piece of furniture. The size of screens should be in proportion to the stage and arch opening and if possible they should be high enough to cover from the audience persons passing behind. The *cross over* thus formed will be found invaluable for communication from one side of the stage to the other while the play is in progress.

It is quite possible to have screens built in the manual training department of the school, and if they are acquired by this

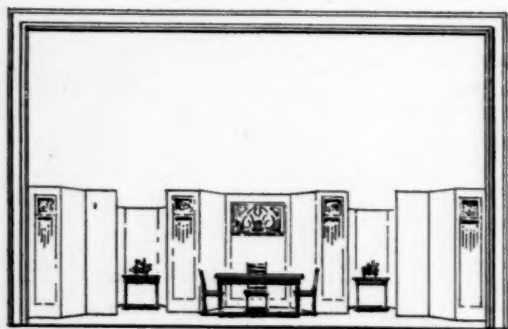
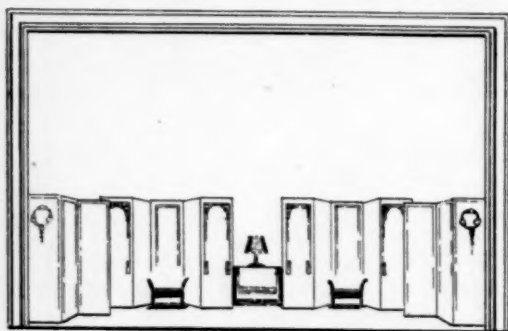


must be made in view of the audience as there is no front curtain. Here the above mentioned lighting equipment is used to advantage. The light plot would be as follows:

Stage set before audience is admitted to the hall; house lights up full, stage lights out; audience admitted and time for "curtain" arrives; house lights are switched off; just a few seconds pause; the stage lights are switched on and the play begins. At the end of scene one, stage lights are switched off and house lights on; scene is changed and proceeds as opening of scene one.

The School pageant is especially adaptable to stages having a minimum of equipment as the pageant can be so arranged to form its own background after the first few characters are upon the stage. Many teachers write the pageant to be produced in their school at Christmas, Thanksgiving, Maytime and other seasons. For the pageant, screens form a simple background sufficient to break the monotony of the plastered or painted wall at the same time allow the costumed figures to be grouped in tableau form as a secondary background to the more important figures.

For a Christmas pageant the stage may be decorated with screens hung with holly or other evergreens and a few small Christmas trees to cover the ends of screens in order to break the abruptness of the lines. A star may be made from cardboard covered with silvered paper, foil or painted with aluminum paint and arranged to surmount the whole. A procession of trumpeters, carollers, mummers, morris dancers, the



means the screens may be made to any desired size. After building the frames they may be covered with unbleached cotton which is cheap and is a good surface to paint upon or they may be finished by covering with wall paper or any other material.

A good plan is to have reversible hinges used in making screens as it is then possible to use both sides and change the folds to different compositions. Both sides may be decorated in different schemes. Some interesting changes in scenes may be made by simply reversing the screens. The changes

Yule log, etc. may parade upon the stage, each section taking its assigned place forming a tableau background for each separate action, the whole forming an ensemble for the finale.

The illustrations shown are screen combinations and suggested schemes of decoration for various types of plays or pageants. It must be understood that the screens used will be nothing more than a makeshift setting as these cannot possibly be made to cover all the objectionable parts of the stage. For instance, the persons occupying the seats at the ends of the front rows may

be able to see between the screens into the "back stage" section and those occupying the first few rows may see the border light hanging from the ceiling and perhaps some girders may be exposed to the view of most of the audience. But never mind, the audience may be informed that if they will only overlook these objectionable features this time, the money they have subscribed in admission fees will be used to add more equipment with which to improve the settings and cover the objectionable but necessary parts.

ESSENTIALS OF LANGUAGE IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

W. F. TIDYMAN

Head Department of Education and Director of Training School, State Normal School, Farmville, Virginia

The teaching of language in the elementary school is often vague, because the aims, or better, the objectives of the language work are vague, both as to requirements for the elementary school as a whole, and also as to requirements for the particular grades. The approach to the definition of objectives for the school as a whole and for each grade lies in selecting the essential features of language work in the elementary school in terms of which definite objectives can be stated.

Definitely and specifically, what are the essential features of language work, in which elementary school pupils may be expected to show measurable growth? This was the problem undertaken by the supervisory corps of the Training School, State Normal School, Farmville, Virginia.

ESSENTIALS OF LANGUAGE

I. Selection of Subjects

1. Type: a—stories, b—letters, c—explanations, d—arguments.
2. Source: a—toys, b—pets, c—pictures, d—stories, e—nature, f—familiar objects and experiences, g—games, h—school activities, i—recitations. j—current problems.

3. Characteristics: a—personal, b—interesting, c—brief, single phase quality, d—worthwhile.

II. Sentences

1. Kind: a—simple, b—compound, c—complex.
2. Characteristics: a—short, b—clear cut, c—free from common errors, as follows:
 - (1) *and* and *then*, (2) incomplete phrases,
 - (3) run-on, (4) loose dependent clauses,
 - (5) *because* chain, (6) irrelevant *so*.

III. Paragraphs.

1. Number.
2. Length, in sentences.
3. Content: 1—central thought, b—effective use of details.
4. Arrangement of sentences: a—simple, natural, b—inverted order for emphasis, c—variety, d—good beginning and ending sentences.

IV. Vocabulary

1. Simple words, common speech.
2. Elimination of trite expressions.
3. Enrichment of modifiers.
4. Exact use of conjunctions.
5. Use of apt, vivid words and phrases.
6. Use of new words and phrases, read and heard.
7. Meaning of common prefixes and suffixes.
8. Formation and use of common derivatives.

V. Correct Usage.

A. Verbs.

1. Past tense and perfect participles of: a—*see*, b—*do*, c—*come*, d—*go*, e—*run*, f—*sit*,

- g—lie, h—give, i—begin, j—ring, k—write, l—take, m—break, n—sing, o—drink, p—lay.
2. *Was* for *were*.
 3. *Don't* for *doesn't*.
 4. *Ain't*.
 5. *Can* for *may*.
 6. *Got* for *have*, *receive*, *become*, *is*.
 7. *Leave* for *let*.
 8. *Bring* for *take*.
 9. *Left* for *let*.
 10. Agreement with subject, e. g. *He don't*.
 11. Sequence of tenses.
 12. *Shall* and *will*.
 13. *And* for *to* in infinitives.
 14. Incorrect mood.
- B. Pronouns.
1. *Me* for *I*. *It was me*. *Frank and me*.
 2. *Who* for *whom*.
 3. *Them* for *those*.
 4. *Those kind* for *that kind*.
 5. Case forms—in compound subject, object, after copula, compounds, subject of dependent clauses.
 6. Redundant—*John, he—*.
 7. Indefinite reference—*it*.
 8. Order. *I and my brother*.
 9. Wrong pronoun.
 10. Agreement. person, number, gender, *Each—their*.
 11. *They* for *there*.
 12. Wrong form—*hissself, yous, hern, yourn, hisn, theirselves*,
 13. *Us* for *we*.
- C. Miscellaneous.
1. Double negative—*haven't no*.
 2. *In* for *into*.
 3. *A* for *an*.
 4. Adjectives for adverbs—*I stayed near an hour*.
 5. *This here, that there*.
 6. Colloquialisms. *lots* for *many*, *much*; *learn* for *teach*; *get* with infinitive; *like* for *as*; introductory *well, why, now, so*.
 7. Double preposition.
 8. Wrong position of words—*only*.
 9. Adjectives—double superlatives, superlatives for comparative, wrong comparative form.
 10. Common homonyms—*no, to, there, new*.
 11. *Awful* for *very*.
 12. *Funny* for *queer*.
 13. *By* for *at, near*.
 14. *Have got*.
 15. *If* for *whether*.
 16. *Kind of a, sort of a, much of a*.
 17. *Of* for *have*. *I could of gone*.
 18. *Real* for *very*.
 19. *A* for *have*. *Should a been there*.
 20. *Like* for *as*.
 21. *Good* for *well*.
 22. Incorrect idiom.

VI. Essentials peculiar to oral work.

1. Manner: a—natural and easy, b—erect, c—hands in position, d—head up.
2. Voice: a—audible, b—natural pitch, c—good quality, d—inflection.
3. Clear enunciation. *ask* for *asked, taken* for *taking*.
4. Accurate pronunciation. *just, get, final g, for, February, height, ones*.
5. Speech: a—even, b—continuous-flowing, c—forceful.

VII. Essentials peculiar to written work.

- (w—observation in print, x—copying, y—dictation, z—writing).
1. Capitals: a—beginning sentences, b—names, c—I, d—holidays, e—seasons, f—geographical terms, g—letter forms, h—titles of persons, i—titles of compositions, j—days and months, k—poetry.
 2. Periods: a—end of sentence, b—common abbreviations.
 3. Question marks.
 4. Exclamation point.
 5. Quotation marks—simple.
 6. Comma: a—series, b—between city and state, c—after words of address, d—after “yes” and “no,” e—after dependent clauses, f—before quotations, g—before “for” and “so.”
 7. Semi-colon(?)
 8. Apostrophe: a—possessive, b—common contractions.
 9. Hyphen—in dividing words.
 10. Form: a—margin, b—indentation, c—titles
 11. Letter forms: a—business, b—freindly, c—notes.

VIII. Spelling.

1. Correct spelling of all words.
2. Spelling conscience.
3. How and when to use the dictionary.

IX. Handwriting.

- Legible. Quality and rate according to grade norm.

X. Memory.

1. Poems. a—number, b—number of lines.
2. Stories. a—number, b—length.

The outline given above is a brief statement of the results of our study. The main lines of development in composition are taken to be: (I) ability to select subjects, (II) use of sentences, (III) paragraphing, (IV) vocabulary, (V) correct usage, (VI) essentials peculiar to oral work, (VII) essentials peculiar to written work, (VIII) spelling, (IX) handwriting, and (X) memory. The last three were included for completeness. They were not given careful consideration.

I. *Selection of subjects.* In connection with the selection of subjects, we concluded that the pupils should show increasing ability in the use of typical forms of composition, in the sources from which subjects are obtained, and in quality. The types selected—stories, letters, explanations, arguments—represent the main forms that compositions naturally take, and indicate roughly a progression in complexity and difficulty. Similarly, the sources of subjects—toys, pets, pictures, stories, nature, familiar objects and experiences, games, school activities, recitations, current problems—indicate a widening range of interests, and roughly a progressive order of difficulty. The ideal qualities of subjects are indicated by the following: personal, interesting, brief, single phase, and worth-while. They are not qualities that indicate progression in skill, and that separately apply to compositions at different grade or development levels. Rather these are the qualities that should adhere in degree to composition work from the lowest grade. Progress will be indicated in the amount in which each is present in the composition at successive grade levels. It will be recognized that the ability to select suitable subjects is the heart of successful composition work. Having something to say, something that is immediately valuable and interesting to the persons for whom the composition is written, is the primary essential of composition work. Good subjects make compositions worth-while in themselves, and create a motive for the cultivation of good form and good usage.

II. *Sentences.* The kinds of sentences—simple, compound, and complex—show a rough progression in skill, and emphasize the primary importance in language of the sentence idea, developed through the use of simple sentences. The qualities—short, clear-cut, and free from common language errors—are relative terms. They indicate lines along which progress will be made, rather than absolute amounts. The errors listed are those that repeated investigations show to be common in the compositions of

children and adults.

III. *Paragraphs.* Growth in skill to write paragraphs is shown in the number of paragraphs; length in sentences, selection and organization of ideas—emphasizing a central idea, and subordinating details; and in the arrangement of sentences. The arrangement of sentences indicates a rough progression in difficulty and suggests specifically the importance of the beginning and ending sentences, as important features of the paragraph.

IV. *Vocabulary.* That the vocabulary is an important factor in effective composition, and that the vocabulary is subject to considerable modification, is obvious. The particulars in which growth takes place are not so clear. The eight heads suggested above are selected to indicate what we regard as the important lines of growth.

V. *Correct usage.* Investigation has revealed rather clearly the common errors in oral and written language. The specific forms to be mastered in the use of verbs, pronouns, and miscellaneous words are indicated in the outline.

VI. *Essentials peculiar to oral work.* To a large extent the essentials of good composition are the same for oral and written work. These common essentials are indicated in the first five sections of the outline. The essentials peculiar to oral work seem to relate to manner, voice, enunciation, pronunciation, and the general flow of speech. The items under each of these heads are qualities that characterize good oral language.

VII. *Essentials peculiar to written work.* The uses of capitals, marks of punctuation, and forms for papers and letters, that are regarded as essential to common written work by investigators and teachers, are given a place in this section. Distinction is made between the ability to recognize and use correct forms in (1) observation in print, (2) copying, (3) dictation, and (4) writing. An effort has been made to select only those features that are quite clearly found in common usage.

In the preparation of this outline advan-

tage has been taken of the many valuable investigations of language errors, and the manuals of language teaching. The work is not considered conclusive. It is doubtless quite possible to formulate a much better outline. It is offered as an attempt to find a way of approach to definite objectives in an important field of school work where objectives have often been very vague.

The outline is merely a beginning. Given the essential aspects of language work, it remains for us to work out, as definitely as possible, just what amount of each quality may be expected in each grade, and for the elementary school as a whole.

Useful books in the preparation of the outline were as follows:

1. Training School Course of Study, Farmville, Virginia.
2. Moore. Minimum Course of Study, pages 133-194.
3. Sheridan. Speaking and Writing English.
4. Mahoney. Standards in English.
5. Bonser. Elementary School Curriculum.
6. Recent textbooks.
7. Betz and Marshall. "Grammar Based on Errors." Eng. Journal, Vol. 5, pages 491-501.
8. Briggs, Grammar as a Formal Discipline. T. C.

R. XII 5-22.

9. Brown. "Some needed readjustments in the Teaching of English Grammar." Eng. Journal, Vol. 2, pp. 81-93.
10. Charters. "Reports of Studies of Children's Errors." 16th Yearbook, 1917.
11. Report of Technical Grammar. T. C. R. Vol. 12.
12. Committee of National Council of English Teachers. "Scientific Standard in English Teaching." Eng. Jour., IV, 28-34.
13. Committee of National Council on Economy of Time. Preliminary Report of Grammar Subcommittee. Eng. Jour., Vol. 8, March 1919.
14. Cross. "Staples of Grammar and Composition." Elementary School Journal. Vol., 18, 253-64.
15. Diebel and Sears. "A Study of the Common Mistakes in Pupils' Written Work." Elementary School Journal, Vol. XVIII, 172-186.
16. Fontaine. "Articulation of English Teaching in Elementary and High Schools." Elementary School Journal, Vol. 3, 303-324.
17. Hosc. Elementary Course in English.
18. Hosc. Composition Standards in the Elementary School. 17th Yearbook.
19. Hoyt. "Place of Grammar in the Elementary School Curriculum." T. C. R. Vol. 7, 1-34.
20. Randolph. "Conventional Aversion versus Fundamental Errors." Ped. Sem., Vol. 24, 318-336.
21. Ward. "A Platform of Grammar." School Review, Vol. 24, 271-282.

"IT WAS AN EASTER RABBIT" AND OTHER EASTER POEMS

At Easter time, I was on a visit one morning to the Crosman School kindergarten. Fifty or sixty of the children were at the season's tasks. They were weaving tiny baskets for their bunnies. Their pretty dresses were colored in as many shades, it seemed, as the strips of paper with which they were weaving the basketry. On every side hues of blue, and red, and tan seemed to flash Easter tidings. All the children were so busy that it was but small greeting I received from a group usually very attentive to guests.

One wee mite of a girl noticed this with some dissatisfaction. She ceased her weaving, dropped everything to go, like the little hostess that she was, to the rescue of her guest. Her manner was that of deep concern as she curtsied, bade me good morning and took my hand.

There was silence a moment. Then as if she were telling me the choicest bits of

news, she drew up more closely and said,

"There are our baskets of eggs on the piano. We are going to have an Easter egg hunt on Thursday."

"How delightful," said I.

She was walking with me to the piano, and in a casual way, chatting all the while. "There's a rabbit that comes to my house," she confided.

"Is that true?" I queried. "Yes," she confirmed, catching her breath, "Every night—an' he goes everywhere—all around in my room and mamma's room and up in the attic."

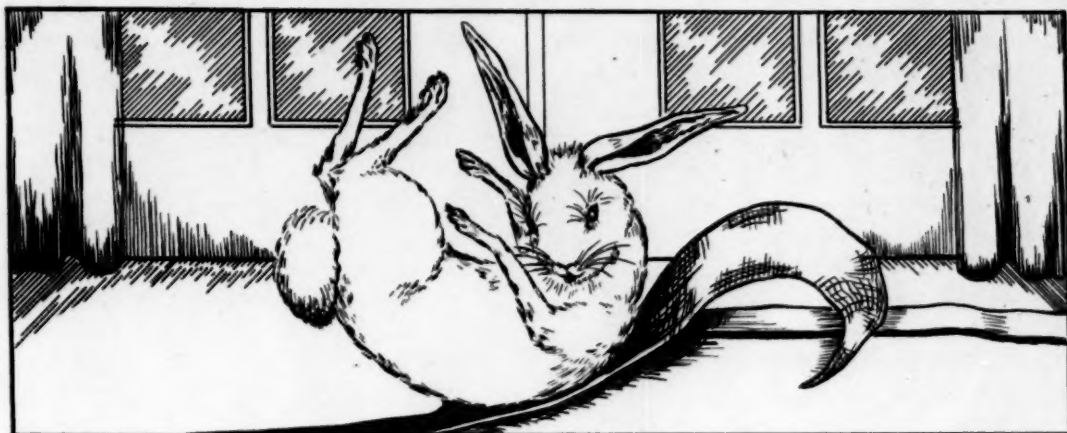
"Did you ever see him?" I asked, as if to make capital of her definiteness.

"No," she replied, her eyes glowing brightly. "We are all asleep," and in her little face was the expression of one who knows the joy of a privately owned mystery.

She became in that instant the inspiration for several Easter poems.

FUN FOR THE CHILDREN

C. C. CERTAIN



IT WAS AN EASTER RABBIT

It was an Easter rabbit cutting capers in the house;
Though judging from the silence, it might have been a mouse.
He hopped upon the tables; he dodged behind the doors.
He tripped upon the edges of the rugs upon the floors.

In and out of corners, on and off of chairs —
He must have had a merry time a jumping on the stairs.
But neither baby Joe, nor Caroline, nor Jim
Waked in the night to catch a glimpse of him.

It was an Easter rabbit that loped around the room;
Though it might have been a shadow in the midnight gloom.

WHAT TOYS ARE BEST FOR EASTER DAY?*

George and Jim and Susan and Ann
Are going out walking as fast as they can.
They scarcely know for what they seek;
But are out for adventure, Easter week.

Along the journey, and afar away,
They meet a Cockerel in plumage gay.
"Tell us, Cockerel, won't you say,
"What toys are best for Easter day."

*Aloud to grades 1 and 2.

Says the Cockerel strutting as if to crow,
"I am proud to tell you all I know.
"Go cross this country from east to west,
"You'll find these toys, I name, the best:
"Rabbits and ducks and chickens and eggs,
"And ducks and rabbits and chickens and eggs,
"And chickens and ducks and rabbits and eggs,
"And eggs and chickens and ducks and

rabbits,
 "And eggs and chickens and rabbits and ducks,
 "And eggs and rabbits and ducks and chickens.
 "Now if this Cockerel you wish to please,
 "You'll say at once how many are these."

But George and Jim and Susan and Ann
 Walk on as fast as ever they can.
 And on their journey, where hills are steep,
 They see in a pasture a woolly sheep.
 "Tell us, Sheep, won't you say,
 "What toys are best for Easter day."

The Sheep looks up, then looks around;
 Then thoughtfully looks upon the ground.
 "Many are the toys I can name with ease,
 "But none for Easter are better than these—
 "Rabbits and ducks and chickens and eggs,
 "And ducks and rabbits and eggs and chickens,
 "And eggs and ducks and chickens and rabbits,
 "And ducks and eggs and rabbits and chickens,
 "And rabbits and chickens and ducks and eggs,
 "And eggs and ducks and chickens and rabbits.
 "Now if this Sheep you wish to please,
 "You'll say at once how many are these."

But George and Jim and Susan and Ann
 Walk on as fast as ever they can.
 And on the journey, they come full soon,
 To a Farmer dining at home at noon.
 "Tell us, Farmer, won't you say,
 "What toys are best for Easter day."

The Farmer greets them with a smile,
 And bids them sit and stay awhile.
 "Far be it from me to judge these things.
 "Yet, 'tis said at Easter when the bluebird
 sings,
 "Simple little toys are sure to please;
 "And to my way of thinking the best are
 these—

"Rabbits and chickens and ducks and baskets of eggs,
 "And baskets of eggs and chickens and ducks and rabbits,
 "And chickens and ducks and rabbits and baskets of eggs,
 "And baskets of eggs and rabbits and chickens and ducks,
 "And ducks and chickens and rabbits and baskets of eggs,
 "And baskets of eggs and ducks and chickens and rabbits.
 "Now if this Farmer you wish to please,
 "You'll say at once how many are these."

But George and Jim and Susan and Ann
 Walk on as fast as ever they can.
 And on the journey, they come at last,
 To a Pig in a pen that holds him fast.
 "Tell us, Pig, won't you say,
 "What toys are best for Easter day."

Up raised the Pig his snout with zeal,
 As if to answer with squeaky squeal.
 "For all the goodies that in pantries go
 "I would not refuse you what I know.
 "Of all the toys that are made to please
 "None for Easter are better than these—
 "Ducks and chickens and baskets of eggs and rabbits,
 "And rabbits and ducks and baskets of eggs and chickens,
 "And chickens and rabbits and baskets of eggs and ducks,
 "And ducks and rabbits and baskets of eggs and chickens,
 "And chickens and ducks and baskets of eggs and rabbits,
 "And rabbits and chickens and baskets of eggs and ducks.
 "Now if this Pig you wish to please,
 "You'll state at once how many are these."

And George and Jim and Susan and Ann,
 Begin to think as hard as they can.
 And George and Susan say it's four,
 But Jim and Ann are sure it's more.

STORY TELLING FOR APPRECIATION

STELLA SUFINSKY

Assistant Supervisor of English

The story is one of the most vital and fundamental things in the school curriculum. It interprets life, affects thinking and behavior, and helps to furnish a background upon which to base our democracy. It gives vicarious experience and enriches the appreciation of all phases of work and play. Therefore, it is essential that we recognize our purposes clearly and guide ourselves by them in the selection and method of teaching literature.

The following material will appear as one phase of the work in literature in the new Course of Study in English for Detroit Schools.

GENERALIZATION METHOD

To bring about a more efficient teaching of story appreciation the following general method is offered.

OUTLINE OF METHOD

- I. *Purpose.*
 - A. Teacher
 - B. Story.
 - C. Pupils.
- II. *Preparation.*
 - A. Setting of the stage.
 - B. Presentation of the story.
 - C. Location of points of difficulty.
 - D. Mastery of points of difficulty.
- III. *Appreciation.*
 - A. Enrichment.
 1. Related personal experiences.
 2. Related vicarious experiences.
 3. Teacher contributions.
 - B. Focalization of attention upon significant points in the story.
 1. Selection.
 2. Reasons.
 - C. Generalization.

Personal behavior as guided by:

 1. Story in hand,
 2. Other helpful material for different situations,
 3. Sharing of helpful material.
- IV. *Appraisal—Check.*

DETAILED EXPLANATION OF METHOD

I. *Purpose.*

A. Teacher.

The teacher must have some purpose which she can effect (to some degree) through the medium of a story.

B. Story.

The story must have that within it which will qualify it to answer the teacher's purpose.

C. Pupils.

The pupils must have had sufficient experience to enable them to appreciate the ideals, ideas, and language of the story.

II. *Preparation.*

A. Setting of the stage.

The first step is a setting of the stage. In general, it should be very brief, very pointed, and act like the turning on of an electric current. It should arouse in the children a desire to hear the story.

B. Presentation of the story.

The teacher should tell the story dramatically, working for an effect, and using the language of the source indicated in the Course of Study. If for some reason, she is unable to learn the story and must read it to the children, she should be so familiar with it that she can keep her eyes off the page most of the time. The following points are important:

1. Obvious enjoyment and appreciation of the part of the teacher,
2. Pose—natural, easy; no unnecessary movements,
3. Voice—modulated but alive,
4. Enunciation—clear-cut,
5. Sentences—distinct from one another.

C. Location of points of difficulty.

After telling the story, the teacher stimulates discussion in order to find out from the pupils' remarks what points are understood and which have caused difficulty. She should place herself at the service of

the children and study them to locate their needs.

1. Pupils should be encouraged to ask intelligent questions. If they learn to realize what they don't know and ask about it freely, we avoid much misunderstanding and lack of appreciation. Interest (healthy curiosity) is what is not understood and power to select points of difficulty are desirable outcomes of appreciation work. The children's activities at this stage should be spontaneous and self directed.

2. Spontaneous dramatization of the story, in parts or as a whole, should be encouraged as an effective means of interpretation. Great care should be taken to avoid the exploitation of a few pupils. Every child should have an opportunity for expression if he desires it. The purpose of this work is not to develop a finished dramatic performance but to use the play instinct as a means of analysis and interpretation and a form of individual expression and social participation.

D. Mastery of points of difficulty.

The teacher should help pupils master points of difficulty by going back into their own experiences for interpretation. She may offer vicarious experience where it is necessary. At all times her attitude should be intelligently sympathetic. Ignorance and misunderstanding on the part of the children should be received not with ridicule, surprise or disgust, nor on the other hand with an affected sorrow or pseudo joviality, but rather with an intelligent, calm, and kindly readiness to give help where there is a felt need.

III. *Appreciation.*

A. Enrichment.

There should be a process of enrichment to raise the degree of appreciation of the story as far as possible. Following are some suggestive means which may be brought to bear:

1. Recall of pupil's own related past experiences and associations,
2. Recall of pupils' related vicarious experiences through stories read or heard, movies seen, situations observed, etc.,

3. Types of teacher's contributions which often have the desired effect:

- (a) blackboard sketches,
- (b) large pictures, colored, if possible,
- (c) stereopticon slides,
- (d) moving pictures,
- (e) exhibits from art museum,
- (f) visits to art museum,
- (g) trips,
- (h) information furnished by teacher.

It is evident that the three steps mentioned above (Location of Points of Difficulty, Mastery of Points of Difficulty, and Enrichment) will not always stand out in distinct order during the course of a lesson. There will be overlapping, perhaps, but the steps, themselves, and the teacher's definite recognition and development of them should be obvious.

B. Focalization of attention upon significant points in the story.

One of the essentials to appreciation by pupils is that they should be able to select the significant points in the story. Every pupil in the room will not appreciate all the significant points nor will all pupils appreciate equally any one point. Therefore each pupil's appreciation is enriched by the contributions of his fellows.

Effective questions that may be used here are "What do you like in the story?" "Why?" "What do you think is an interesting part in the story?" "Why?"

C. Generalization.

Generalization is the formulation of the lesson gained from the story as a guide to future thinking or behavior on the part of the pupils.

It is desirable that this idea should carry over to the extent that pupils will seek in literature for help in the interpretation of other life situations and that they will share these experiences with those who need them.

IV. *Appraisal—Check.*

In order to determine the success of her teaching in terms of purposing and behavior, the teacher must use some means of appraisal. There are several ways to check up:

1. By observation of pupil's behavior in situations analagous to that of the story, when they arise in the school room, in the street, or on the play ground,

2. By pupils' voluntary contributions of personal experiences in which they have made use of the ideas gained through the appreciation lesson,

3. By tactful questioning and discussion a week or more after the appreciation lesson.

SPECIAL APPLICATION

SIXTH GRADE

The Actor and the Pig-Phaedrus

I. Purpose.

A. Teacher.

To help pupils develop a sense of responsibility in their criticism of others.

B. Story.

1. "The Actor and the Pig" illustrates in a humorous way the results of unintelligent and biased criticism.

2. Fables, pithy and homely, teach us the "rules of the road."

C. Pupils.

1. Pupils often find themselves in situations which demand from them intelligent, thoughtful, and fair minded criticism.

2. Pupils are familiar with situations similar to that in the story.

II. Preparation.

A. Setting of the stage.

Teacher:

Did you ever hear anyone make an unfair criticism or one that showed very little thought or understanding? Tell us about it. (Take only one or two answers).

In the story I am about to tell you, you will have an opportunity to judge the value of the criticism that was offered.

B. Presentation of the story.

(Teacher tells the story. See General Method.)

C.—D. Location and Mastery of points of difficulty.

1. Teacher: I'll tell the story again. This time if you hear anything about which you wish to ask a question, raise your hands.

Discussion.

Note: It is desirable but not always possible to give each pupil a mimeographed copy of the story instead of telling it again in the above step.

2. Teacher: Let us play the story to see if you fully understand it.

Suggestive units:

The first performance of the actor,

The trial of skill,

Points to be understood:

Actor's imitation of a pig,

Peasant's challenge,

Contest,

Peasant's contempt.

Points of difficulty—suggestive list:

The teacher should study the story carefully beforehand so that she will be prepared to answer questions like the following which may arise in the minds of the pupils. Occasionally, she may need to ask a question if the pupil does not realize his own difficulty.

Why did the actor cover his head?

Why did the audience applaud when the actor produced no pig?

Why was the peasant shocked at the applause?

Why did he challenge the actor?

Why did the people wish to hiss the peasant?

How does one hiss?

Why did the peasant bring a live pig to compete with the actor?

Was it fair?

Why did the people prefer the actor's imitation?

What did the peasant mean when he said that the people hissed the pig?

Why did he call them "excellent judges?"

What does a pig's squeak sound like?

How does an audience "thunder applause?"

Appropriate expression, tone of voice, gestures, etc., to indicate:

Appreciation,

Satisfaction

Disgust,

Eagerness,

Derision,

Contempt.

Pupils should be encouraged to discuss each other's efforts sympathetically. "Do you think Sam was good as the countryman? Why do you think so?" are questions that stimulate discussion during which, points mentioned above may be developed. Several different groups may dramatize the same part of the story if they wish to express individual ideas. Pupils should dominate the above step (C-D) with the teacher guiding.

III. Appreciation.

A. Enrichment.

1. Interpretation of the idea of responsibility in making criticisms:

(a) recall of pupils' own related past experiences and associations,

Suggestive remarks:

Did anyone ever give you unfair criticism or criticism that did not help you? Tell us about it.

(b) recall of pupils' related vicarious experiences,

Suggestive remarks:

Did you ever witness an incident or read about a case where the criticism offered was unfair, thoughtless, or not helpful? Tell us about it.

2. Discussion and dramatization.

B. Focalization of attention upon significant points in the story.

At this stage pupils share their individual appreciations with one another. They select what, to them, are the significant points in the story and give reasons for their choices.

Suggestive questions:

Did you like the story? Why?

Where were you most interested? Why?

Where were you most pleased? Why?

How do you feel toward the countryman? Why?

What do you think of the people? Why?

What do you think of the trick?

Have you ever read or heard any other story that reminds you of this one? What was it?

A question that will further help to bring out the desired points, establish standards for the pupils, and give opportunities for judgments, is, "Whom (of the actors) did you like best? Why?"

C. Generalization.

Teacher: Grace, you told us that—
(Give pupil's own related experience.)

Does this story give you any further ideas on the subject?

Let us hear some other of your incidents discussed with reference to this little fable.

What things would it be well for us to remember when we offer criticism?

If you have any experiences with unfair criticism or criticism that doesn't help you, tell us about it. If you come across such a case in real life or in your reading, report it to us. We will watch for these incidents in our class, too.

Note: Points I, II, III, can be done in one thirty-minute period. The story should be retold in part or as a whole whenever there is a need for it, or a pupil who is a good reader may read the portion in question. The teacher talks as little as possible. The lesson moves briskly and cheerfully.

IV. Appraisal—Check.

The teacher should observe whenever it

is possible, the pupils' behavior in life situations analogous to that in the story, in the school room, on the play ground, and in the street.

Possible situations:

Socialized recitations,

Games,

Casual conversation among social groups.

Suggestive remarks which may precipitate such situations:

1. Have you any comments to make on Mary's composition?

2. How do you think Laura acted her part?

3. Do you think George was a good chairman? Give reasons for your opinion.

4. Do you think that Flora told that story well? What comments do you wish to make?

5. What's wrong with the way I did it?

Although the class room offers many opportunities for the teacher to check up on her work in this particular instance, still she can not be completely satisfied with observation alone and should, therefore, try to draw reactions from her pupils. The following remarks are suggestive:

Teacher: (About a week after the appreciation lesson).

1. Has any one received thoughtless or useless criticism lately? Tell us about it.

2. Has any one given criticism lately that was not helpful or really intelligent? What was the instance?

3. Has the story of "The Actor and the Pig" come to your mind lately? What was the occasion?

4. Have you noticed or read anything lately that reminded you of "The Actor and the Pig?" What was it?

If the appreciation lesson has been successful, the pupils will enjoy hearing or reading the story again. They will report on stories with similar ideas and situations if they meet them outside of school and will be quick to sense in a good humored way, the application of the point of the fable to such situations as may arise.

Other stories of this type which pupils will enjoy hearing or reading for themselves:

The Jealous Courtiers—Stories to Tell to Children, Bryant.

The Clocks of Rondaine—Fanciful Tales, Stockton.

The Owl Critic—Fields (Poem).

EDITORIALS

The Elementary English Review

THE ELEMENTARY ENGLISH REVIEW is published monthly from September to June in the interest of teachers of English in the elementary schools. It is sponsored by the following board of advisers:

- H. B. Wilson, Superintendent of Schools, Berkeley California.
A. J. Cloud, Chief Deputy Superintendent of Schools, San Francisco, California.
Theda Gildemeister, Department of Education, Winona State Teachers College, Winona, Minnesota.
W. W. Hatfield, Secretary of the National Council of Teachers of English, Chicago, Illinois.
Sterling A. Leonard, School of Education, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin.
Clara Beverley, Supervisor of English, Detroit Public Schools, Detroit, Michigan.
Rollo Lyman, The School of Education, The University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois.
Charles S. Pendleton, The George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tennessee.
Amanda Bibb Russell, Supervisor of Intermediate Grades, Chattanooga, Tennessee.
James M. Grainger, Department of English, State Normal School, Farmville, Virginia.
Orton Lowe, Department of Public Instruction, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.
Mary A. S. Mugan, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Fall River, Massachusetts.
Florence E. Bamberger, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland.

THE REVIEW is devoted exclusively to the teaching of English in elementary schools with emphasis upon the social well being of children:

I. As influenced by their study of—

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Literature, | 4. Dramatics, |
| 2. Silent Reading, | 5. Composition, |
| 3. Oral Reading, | 6. Grammar, |
| | 7. Spelling. |

II. As conditioned by—

1. The School Library,
2. Standard Tests,
3. Scientific Procedures for Experimental Teaching,

4. A More Effective Organization of Elementary School Teachers of English.

Outstanding features of the REVIEW are:

1. Articles by educational authorities discussing principles basic to the teaching of English in elementary schools,
2. Articles by classroom teachers setting forth their practical experiences in the solution of difficult problems,
3. Articles outlining co-operative experiments based upon principles of scientific research,
4. Articles discussing prominent writers of the day in the field of children's literature,
5. Articles discussing artists prominent as illustrators of children's books.

In addition to articles of the character outlined in the foregoing paragraphs, the REVIEW features such other matter as the following:

1. Reports upon material needed for classroom use, courses of study, pamphlets, poems, stories, pictures, lantern slides, and phonograph records,
2. Devices and methods of proved value in classroom teaching,
3. Procedures for giving standard tests, tabulating data, etc.,
4. Bibliographies of recent books and magazine articles,
5. Book reviews,
6. Abstracts of magazine articles, including those occurring in educational periodicals and in other journals of interest to teachers of English,
7. Professional news items, reports of meetings, announcements of programs, activities of educational organizations, summer school courses, itineraries for vacation trips, classroom experiments and courses of study in process of development.

TO PROSPECTIVE SUBSCRIBERS:

The success of the Review depends upon your support and enthusiasm.

PRACTICAL EXERCISES FOR CLASSROOM USE

Second and Third Grade Activity in Oral and Written Composition

MAUD BOWLES

Assistant Supervisor of English

1. STIMULATION.

One or more of the following suggestions may serve as an approach to this activity:

1. The reading or study of a poem about a baby; as "Where Did You Come From, Baby Dear?" by George MacDonald.

2. An attractive picture of a baby.

3. How many have a little baby at home? How many have a baby cousin or neighbor? Would you like to make a little book about babies, telling something interesting or amusing about babies you know?

2. ASSISTANCE.

Teacher: How can you make your book pretty and attractive?

Possible answers: We could have a pretty cover. I think it would be nice to have a picture on the cover. I would like to paste a picture of a baby on my paper. I have a lovely picture of a baby in a magazine. I'll cut it out for my story. We could give our book a name. I'd call it "Baby Dear."

Teacher: Shall we decide now what to do with our book when it is finished?

Possible suggestions: The book may be placed in the school library, given to the principal, sent to the English department, loaned to another class, or sent to another school in exchange for a booklet made by pupils in the same grade.

Teacher and pupils talk informally about particular babies and their amusing and interesting sayings and doings. The teacher will help the child express himself by suggesting words which he may wish to use later. For instance, a child may say that his baby sister pulls the tins out of the pantry and scatters them over the kitchen floor. The teacher may reply, "She's a little mischief, isn't she? You may wish to use the word mischief when you tell about your baby. I'll write it on the board for you." Thus words brought out in the discussion may be listed on the board and pupils encouraged to use them in their oral and written stories. Such a list may contain some of the following words: mischief, darling, bright, chubby, wonderful, dear, precious, dainty, sturdy, beautiful, pretty, sweet, lovable, brown-eyed, dimpled, golden-haired, good-natured, rosy-cheeked, happy.

Teacher: I think we would like to know some other things about the baby before we tell what it does. I will tell you about a baby I know. Perhaps you would like to tell the same things about your baby.

Example of teacher's story:

My little niece is a good-natured baby. She is just one year old. When her mother puts her dress over her head, she laughs and says "peek-a-boo."

The following outline may be placed upon the board as a guide:

1. Who baby is

2. How old baby is

3. Something interesting about baby

At the close of the period pupils are encouraged to observe babies, to play with them, to talk about them at home, and to find out how old their particular baby is before the next session.

The next day, pupils come to class full of their subject and eager to share their stories with each other. Some bring pictures of babies which they have cut from magazines. Before telling their stories, pupils agree:

1. To follow the outline on the board in telling their stories.

2. To use, if it is suitable, a word in their first sentence from the list on the board that will best help all to see their particular baby.

3. To show by the voice the close of each sentence as an aid to the listener.

After all have participated orally, the compositions will be written for the booklets. Before doing this, however, pupils should be familiar with the items of self-criticism (see items below) which will be on the board in view of all, and should have had practice in their use.

The spelling of words the pupils do not know may be cared for in the following manner:

Every child will have a sheet of scratch paper on the left hand corner of his desk. All will start to write their stories. When a child wishes to use a word he cannot spell, he leaves a space for the word and goes on with his story. The teacher passes up and down the aisles, and as each child tells her the word he needs, she writes it for him on the paper provided for that purpose. Some pupils will be interested sufficiently in their undertaking to have their parents or an older brother or sister write the needed words on a piece of paper for them. The teacher will encourage them to do this.

After each pupil finishes, he goes over his story using the items of self-criticism and correcting any error.

Items of Self-Criticism or Self-Help:

1. Is the title in the middle of the first line?

2. Does the first word in the title and every important word begin with a capital letter?

3. Have I omitted a line between the title and the story?

4. Have I a margin?

5. Did I indent the first line in the paragraph?

6. I will read every sentence carefully to myself. I will answer four questions about each sentence:

(1) Does the sentence begin with a capital letter?

(2) Is there a period or question mark at the end?

(3) Have I left out any words?

(4) Is each word spelled correctly?

If pupils have not had sufficient practice to use these items of self-help independently, the teacher will aid them form the habit of intelligent self-criticism. Each item may be read aloud, after which each pupil will answer the question to himself about his own work.

3. GENERALIZATION.

When each child has completed his sheet, including pasting of the picture, the paper may be placed upon the chalk ledge where all may see. The teacher will then help pupils make such comparisons and generalizations as will aid them in any similar undertaking.

Teacher may ask, "which do you like best? Why?" Comparison may be made as to neatness, form and handwriting.

Teacher: (after the book has been compiled) Did you enjoy making this book? Would you like to make another book sometime? If you made another book, what could you do better?

There follow several compositions from a Book of Babies made by 2A pupils in a foreign district.

MY BABY

We have a pretty baby at home. She is not one year old yet. When I rock her she says "da-da."

MY NEPHEW

My sister has a chubby little baby. He is about eight months old. When I build some blocks two feet high and then knock them over, he laughs.

MY COUSIN'S BABY

My cousin has a chubby little baby. She is two years old. When I went to her house last night she said "Peter." That is the first time she ever called my name.

FROM THE INTERNATIONAL BOOK REVIEW

CHOOSING THE CENTURY'S FAVORITE BOOKS—Final Results of a Nation Wide Poll—These are:

The Ten Books Receiving the Highest Poll.

The Outline of History—By H. G. Wells

Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse—By V. Blasco Ibanez

If Winter Comes—By A. S. M. Hutchinson

Americanization of Edward Bok—By Edward Bok

The Life of Christ—By Giovanni Papini

The Crisis—By Winston Churchill

Short Stories—By O. Henry

The Virginian—By Owen Wister

Life and Letters of Walter H. Page—By Burton J. Hendricks

The Mind in the Making—By James Harvey Robinson

The ten authors receiving the highest votes are also listed and there are additional lists of *The Votes for Authors After the First Ten*. The ten favorites by the voters are compared with the ten favorites by professional critics. Facts are given about each of the ten books receiving the highest vote.—The Literary Digest International Book Review, II, 4 (March 1924) 261-264.

WHAT CHILDREN READ AT HOME

(Concluded from page 5)

thrill. It is not the number of books read that is important, but the kind.

Now to quote Alice, "The moral of this is"?— Perhaps there isn't any moral. Certainly the children of the first group enjoyed reading when they were adults, and they have a fairly keen appreciation of literary values. When today's child is grown, the outside interests may win in

spite of a mother's best endeavor. But we are too apt to consider children in the light of what they will become. Childhood is a distinct phase of life. A child is not a *little man*, but an *entirely different creature*. Even if you can accomplish *nothing* for the future, reading in the home is worth all the effort expended, if it gives *joy* to the *children now*.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

An AI Literature Lesson

I. OBSERVATIONS BY ELIZABETH E. BOWLES

The story of "Little Black Sambo," always a favorite with children, was told exceedingly well, and with much animation by the teacher. One of the little girls reproduced the story with occasional help and encouragement from the teacher. As a reward for her effort, she was allowed to choose the characters for the dramatization, and she also, with suggestions from other members of the class, planned the stage setting.

The children took great pleasure in the dramatization of the story, and were able, with occasional promptings by their companions, to carry on the activity.

After the dramatization the children returned to their seats, and the teacher asked, "What was it that Little Sambo forgot to do the very first thing?" There was no other criticism of their work.

A part of the poem, "My Shadow" was then recited by the class and dramatized by two of the boys who had already taken part, and by two girls, one of whom was the child who had been most prominent in the early part of the lesson. The teacher then gave a new stanza to the class and asked the help of everyone in repeating it.

Criticisms

The teacher's manner with the children was delightful, and an observer could not but feel that fortunate, indeed, was the child who could spend at least a part of his day in the presence of so lovable and charming a personality. It was plain to see that the children regarded their teacher as a friend and helper who was ready to render assistance when they needed it.

That the pupils' participation in the telling of the story was not all that could have been desired was due, no doubt, to the fact that the story was a very old one to them. Perhaps the teacher could have stimulated a more active participation in the telling of the story, if she had first aroused their interest or curiosity in some way. For instance, she might have said, "I am going to tell you an old story, but I am going to change it in a number of ways. When I am through telling the story you may tell us how many discoveries you have made." The color of the garments, the number of tigers, the number of pancakes, etc. might have been changed. I think, then, the children would have had something to listen for, and their interest would have been increased.

The attention of the pupils could have been held more successfully during the reproduction if the pupils had been asked to choose the one who should tell the story, or if, after the first child had reproduced a part, he had been asked to call upon another child to continue and so on. In that way five or six children might

have participated and every child would have been alert.

I think the little actors should have been chosen by the other members of the class and not by the little girl who had reproduced the story. This would have given more children an opportunity to participate in the dramatization or the planning of it. A few of the more forward children had too much activity, while some of the shy and more backward had no active participation in any part of the lesson. The teacher, however, by a word of encouragement, did persuade a few who were inclined to hold back, to participate.

The teacher might have given the children an opportunity to develop judgment by asking them, after the dramatization, to criticize their performance. Were the characters lifelike? Did Little Sambo do his part well? Why? What about the tigers? Could any part have been improved? etc.

It is not easy to give a demonstration lesson. It is much easier to sit by and criticize and tell what might have been done. No doubt, in a regular lesson, the teacher would have drawn out the more reticent children, but, in her desire to have the lesson go smoothly, she allowed the capable and willing ones to become too prominent for their own welfare or for that of the social group.

II. OBSERVATIONS BY CLARA HORINE

I was too busy enjoying the class to keep tally on my score card, and so I have only some general observations to offer:

As to the subject matter, the story of "Little Black Sambo" and the Stevenson poem, "My Shadow," were both well suited to the class. The children really enjoyed them. The fact that the story was familiar to many of the class may have "taken the edge" off their enjoyment for some, but often children like "twice told tales" even better than new ones.

The reproduction by the little girl served a twofold purpose: it fixed the main points of the story in the children's minds so that it became usable for dramatization, and it set a standard of pupil performance. What one of their number had done so well, they too might hope to do some day. The pupils seemed just as attentive as they were when their teacher talked. I noticed that the little girl appealed to the teacher for help rather than to her classmates, as in the case of the word "jungle," which she called "jumble."

The dramatization was full of spontaneous action, and I marvelled at the teacher's ability to keep herself in the background. Many of the class contributed suggestions for dramatization, and the pupils, not the teacher, accepted or vetoed them. One little boy, for instance, was blocked in his purpose to "make a jungle"

with chairs. Several declined to act as tigers, and they were—wisely, I think—not urged. Whether it was shyness or stubbornness that impelled them, in either case simply ignoring them was the best treatment. Shyness, unobserved, may disappear, and the unsocial child whose rebellion fails to bring him into the center of the stage will try other tactics. He'd "rather be spanked than not noticed at all."

In the case of the poem, I liked the children's reciting the poem with the teacher, and her method of presenting the new stanza. In the second dramatization the same children took the lead as in the first. They were perhaps too prominent for their own good.

I liked the teacher's easy, natural manner, and her low clear voice, so low that the children *had* to be quiet to hear her.

We Can Do It All

Do you realize that from Ginn and Company's list you can equip your schools from bottom to top with not just "books" but with "leaders" in every branch? Examine this "all star cast."

COMMON SCHOOL

Horn, Beacon, Field, Young and Field Readers; Potter, Jeschke and Gillet's English; Wentworth-Smith School Arithmetics (3-or-6-book form); Frye-Atwood Geography; Lewis Spellers; Long's America, Montgomery Revised History, Stephenson's U. S. History; Gulick Physiology Series (2-book form); Waters' Elementary Agriculture; Music Education Series; Supplementary and Collateral Reading Books in various branches.

HIGH SCHOOL

D'Ooge's Latin Books; Hawkes, Luby, Touton and Wentworth-Smith Mathematics; Millikan and Gale, McPherson and Henderson, Caldwell and Eikenberry, Bergen and Caldwell, Gruenberg's and Waters' Science; Tanner Composition and The Long Literature; Robinson and Breasted, Muzzey, Hill, and Morehouse and Graham History and Social Science; Miner and Elwell, Huffcut, and Brigham Commercial. Music books for grade and high school.

WE CAN DO IT ALL

Write Ginn and Company, Publishers
2301 Prairie Avenue
Chicago.

THE ELEMENTARY ENGLISH REVIEW

Subscription Rate \$2.00 per year

Single Copies 35 cents

The attached blank may be filled out and returned

C. C. CERTAIN, Editor,
The Elementary English Review,
7450 Woodward Avenue,
Detroit, Michigan.

Dear Sir:—Please send THE ELEMENTARY ENGLISH REVIEW to the following address for one year of ten issues. I am enclosing my check for.....

Name Street

City.....State.....

REVIEWS AND ABSTRACTS

JEREMY AND HAMLET. By Hugh Walpole. New York City: George H. Doran Co., 1923.

Very glad, indeed, are we for the return of Jeremy and his "suitable" dog, Hamlet, whose independent escapades influenced by various conflicting moods are almost as entertaining as the adventures of his young master, Jeremy, himself. Hamlet, the kitchen dog; Hamlet, the snob; Hamlet, a bundle of heroism in his thrilling encounter with a certain detestable poodle; Hamlet, the devoted follower and "pal" of Jeremy—Hamlet, in any situation, is a delightfully interesting small dog.

To be sure, Jeremy is growing up in this second book in which Hugh Walpole relates his interesting story in so fascinating a manner; yet he is, after all, just the same rare little soul that we met sometime ago when he ran away to the circus—that time, you remember, when only his Uncle Samuel understood him. And this same Uncle Samuel is still the only one who seems to appreciate the real Jeremy; indeed, he is often the inspiration of Jeremy's finer moods and the only one capable of realizing the significance of the moods that are "not so fine."

The whole story shows Jeremy's attempt to understand himself and other people in the midst of a very real bit of English family life and school life of thirty years ago with all their pettiness and occasional great moments, with all their temptations, trials, disappointments, and triumphs.

How Hamlet came out of the kitchen; how Saladin and the Black Bishop and the cathedral did something

to Jeremy's soul; how Jeremy almost missed a wonderful experience with his beautiful lady when he tried to comfort his tiresome little sister by dancing with her; how his Christmas time ended in disaster; how he gained entrance to his Uncle Samuel's haven of refuge, the studio, and thus ended a frightful week of loneliness and dismay; how Jeremy took a dare and found himself in a strange predicament; how young Baltimore added to Jeremy's distress at school; how Jeremy kept his pledge to his comrades in the "baby dorm;" and how a period of despair at Thompson's ended in a glorious victory for our young hero—all this and much more is related in Hugh Walpole's inimitable style. Here, expressions are particularly apt and meaningful, and exquisite phrasing and fine atmosphere mark passage after passage in this fascinating study of a very real and fine small boy.

Always sorry for people in distress even when he despised them for their weakness; always ready to take a dare; never willing to betray a confidence; often displaying astonishing bravery in a strikingly original fashion; always "playing the game" and that manfully—that is Jeremy, a much misunderstood small boy who is so fascinating to us as we see him through Hugh Walpole's eyes. It is hard to leave him in his hour of victory at Thompson's, just as he begins to realize the truth that one person in the world is quite enough.

What an understanding little soul he is!

MONICA EVANS.

FROM THE PERIODICALS

THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH—Brander Matthews reviews under this title *Under the Big Top*. By Courtney Ryley Cooper. Boston: Little, Brown and Co. He is vividly reminiscent of his own boyhood days, the days when all the "boys knew the song which proclaimed that

'Van Amburgh is the man

Who goes to all the shows

'He puts his head in the lion's mouth—

And tells him all he knows.

'The elephants now go round,

The band begins to play,

'And the boys around the monkey's cage

Had better keep out of the way!'"

Brander Matthews thinks that there are only too few stories of circus life. He says that, "There is —*Toby Tyler*, first and foremost; there is a chapter in

Huckleberry Finn; there are two or three chapters in *Hard Times*; there is an illuminating episode—one of the best in the book—in Mr. Hamlin Garland's *Rose of Dutcher's Cooley*; and there is a background of the circus in Edmond de Goncourt's *Freres Zemganno* (but it lacks the color and the flavor of the tan bark.) And this is all the circus fiction that he can now replevin from his reading."

"Limited as this list may be, it is longer than any he can furnish of the books about the circus. There is Frost's *Circus Life and Circus Celebrities*, which is British, for one thing, and which for another, was published forty years ago; there is the volume written by Hugues Le Roux and liberally illustrated by Jules Garnier, but this is French, and it is devoted wholly to the acrobats; there are the several biographies of P. T. Barnum; and there may be a few other volumes

of varying value, but only a few."

Mr. Cooper's *Under the Big Top* consequently is heralded by this one of the old boys with a gladdened heart. The book brings to him joyous recollections. In his opinion the half of the book that is devoted to the animals in the menagerie is intensely interesting

and entertaining.

Every teacher of English should read Mr. Matthews' *The Greatest Show on Earth* and this book, Mr. Cooper's *Under the Big Top*. The pictures are alluring—Brander Matthews, *The Literary Digest International Book Review*, II (March, 1924) 296-297,99.

A BACKWARD GLANCE THROUGH THE PERIODICALS

Edith Cunningham

THE PROBLEM OF THE CHILD'S READING—"It pays to advertise," is as true of books as other merchandise. Reading aloud by the teacher, classroom use of library books, securing cooperation of parents are all necessary to induce reading habits, as against the movies which the writer says takes the child's mind from reading.—Margaret Porter, *Education*, XLII. (1922), 605-10.

INTERESTING FACTORS IN PRIMARY READING MATERIAL—Summary: Primary reading books show an absence of agreement as to what the content should be. Readers had a much wider range of subject matter a generation ago than today.

An inquiry into the interests of children of grades 1-3 show seven leading factors with *surprise* in the lead, then *plot*, then *narrativeness*, *liveliness*, *conversation*, *animalness*, and *moralness*. *Humor* is not appreciated. The very fact there is such variability of interest even in the primary grades indicates the necessity for a wide range of material in these grades. "The content of school reading, in fine, should from the earliest years be as broad as young life itself."—Fannie Wyche Dunn, *Teachers College Record*, (1921).

THE TEN YEAR OLD BOY AND HIS BOOKS—The normal boy of ten is passing through the savage and nomadic stages in the life history of the race. He is active, imaginative, and primitive and must have literature which will foster these characteristics and hasten their growth. Literature dealing with strenuous outdoor life, stirring adventure and achievement is needed. *Robinson Crusoe*, *Swiss Family Robinson*,—Cooper, Cervantes, J. Verne, R. L. Stevenson, Swift, and historical literature.—M. A. Carringer, *Education*, XXXIII, (1912), 166-9.

VALUES IN LIBRARY WORK WITH CHILDREN—Specially trained librarians, who have an intensive study of children's reading in relation to its social, moral, and pedagogical worth to them is very necessary. "Series" should not be encouraged. *Dotty Dimple* and *Little Colonels* not allowed. Animal stories without humane or scientific value not wanted as, *Pierson* and *Wesselhoeft*.—Caroline Burnite, *American Library Association Bulletin* VII, (1911), 282-7.

MEANS OF LEADING BOYS FROM THE DIME NOVEL TO BETTER LITERATURE—A survey was made to find out the extent of dime novel reading, which was about 50%. About half that number stopped from disgust. The following plans suggested to lead boys from such reading,—Substitute good for bad. Nutrition is

necessary for mind and body. Find what interests the boy, then give him something better of the same kind. Use of library books in grammar grades. If necessary use the law against obscene literature.—T. C. Burgess, *Library Journal*, XXI, (1896), 144-7.

HUMOR OF THE COLORED SUPPLEMENT—It is an insult to our great humorists to include as humor what is found in our colored Sunday supplement. The publishers call for fun which no intellect shall be too dull to appreciate. It is merely human nature mocking at grief and laughing at physical deformity. Physical pain is counted on to amuse the humanity of a Christian civilization; deceit is another concept of humor.—Ralph Bergergren, *Atlantic Monthly*, XCVIII, (1906), 269-73.

THE DIME NOVEL IN AMERICAN LIFE—The first and best dime novels were Beadles, which were published about 1860. Their aim was to give in cheap and wholesome form a picture of American wild life. With the passing of the Indian came the cowboy, the detective, and the train robber to take his place. At last the dime novel—a term applied to all cheap fiction—became an atrocity.—C. M. Harvey, *Atlantic Monthly*, C, (1907), 37-45.

WHAT HAS MODERN EDUCATION DONE TO BOOKS?—A clear analysis of the present day situation. The new method of teaching reading and the use of libraries in the schools make for strong reading habits and varied interests in the child which it will take books on many subjects suitable for the right grades to satisfy. —Martha Pritchard, *Publishers Weekly*, (July 21, 1923).

SOME SOCIOLOGICAL SIDE LIGHTS UPON THE SCHOOL LIBRARY—A good article on the aims of our school libraries. The points stressed are right atmosphere, individual education under group organization, care of property, and group control or resentment of selfishness —C.C.Certain, *School and Society*, (September 15, 1923)

BLOWING OUT THE BOY'S BRAINS—The difference between *Treasure Island* and a modern thriller is not the difference in elements but the use the author makes of them. Stevenson works with combustibles but confines them and directs them with care and caution to be of advantage to the boy, while with the thrillers, the author works with the same material, but no moral purpose, no real intelligence. As a result some boy's brains are blown out. He goes into life as crippled as from losing a physical member.—F. K. Mathews, *The Outlook*, CVIII, (1914), 652-654.

SHOP TALK

FROM THE TRI-STATE ENGLISH NOTES:

Mr. C. C. Certain of the Detroit public schools has begun a venture which should be of great importance to teachers of English everywhere, the publication of the *ELEMENTARY ENGLISH REVIEW*. This idea follows upon the decision of the National Council of Teachers of English that the *English Journal* cannot to the best advantage attempt to serve the interests of teachers of English below junior high school. Under Mr. Certain's leadership it should be possible for those of us who are interested in this extremely important English problem to do a great deal toward its solution during the next few years.

THE TEACHERS' LEAGUE OF MINNEAPOLIS

The Teachers' League of Minneapolis during the present year is conducting a series of lectures for the benefit of the teachers of public schools in that city and surrounding towns. The organization is professional in character and is self-supporting in that fees are charged for the lectures which are invariably attended by large groups.

The lecturers who have appeared on their program this year are, Dr. James Fleming Hosic and Dr. William H. Kilpatrick of Columbia University and Miss Nila Banta Smith of the Detroit school system. Dr. Hosic talked on the subject of a more vital treatment of English in the schools. Dr. Kilpatrick discussed the foundations of method as related to a more complete utilization of the resources of child life in the teaching procedure.

The lectures by Miss Smith were devoted to the problem of instruction in the primary grades. She pointed out practical methods of applying modern theory in the classroom. Her discussion centered in large measure around the subject of reading. She distributed at the close of the series of lectures a bulletin of 50 silent reading suggestions for teachers in the primary grades.

A NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON PROBLEMS OF READING INSTRUCTION

Several months ago, Commissioner Tigert, at the suggestion of a group of prominent educators, appointed a committee of seven to canvass the field of reading instruction and to make definite recommendations concerning the problems which confront teachers and supervisors. A preliminary meeting of the committee was held in Cleveland during the week of the meeting of the Department of Superintendence at which a general program of procedure was adopted. At a subsequent meeting seven topics were selected for study and investigation. Each member of the committee was asked to serve as chairman of a sub-committee and to be responsible for the preparation of a report concerning a particular problem. The list of topics and the chairmen of the sub-committees follows:

Types of reading of large social value

Professor S. A. Leonard, University of Wis-

consin

Essential features of a modern program of instruction in reading

Dean W. S. Gray, School of Education, University of Chicago

Special types of reading activities in content subjects

Miss Estaline Wilson, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Toledo, Ohio

Appropriate materials of reading instruction

Professor Ernest Horn, University of Iowa

How to develop independence in recognition of words

Miss Frances Jenkins, University of Cincinnati

Individual differences, tests, and remedial treatment

Miss Laura Zirbes, Lincoln School of Teachers College, Columbia University

How to put across a progressive program of reading instruction

Mr. Frank W. Ballou, Washington, D. C.

The original plan was to have this material published as a bulletin of the United States Bureau of Education, but as this would preclude the mention and criticism of specific tests, and as the National Society for the Study of Education stood ready to print the report, it has been decided to make the report one part of the next year-book of the Society. The Commonwealth Fund has given a small sum for meeting the traveling expenses of the committee, and a larger amount for a topical summary of all reading studies to date, which is being prepared by Dr. Gray. It is hoped to make this report a clear account of the best opinion on the teaching of reading today, and a statement as well of the specific problems which most need research study.

S.A.L.

FORTHCOMING ARTICLES

The Teaching of Poetry in the Grades—Rollo Lyman, The University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.

The Attitude of the Pupil as a Factor in the Spelling Lesson—Charles S. Pendleton, The George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tenn.

Teaching Literature in the Grades—Orton Lowe, State Dept. of Public Instruction, Harrisburg, Pa.

Children's Choice in Short Stories—Wilma Garnet, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa.

Composition and the Composition Class—Elvira D. Cabell, Chicago Normal School, Chicago, Illinois.

Dr. Dolittle, The Children, and the Droll, "Huge" Lofting—C. C. Certain, Detroit, Michigan.

Cultivating Skill in Sentence Building—Howard R. Driggs, New York University, New York City.

The Diagnosis of Spelling Difficulties—Ina H. Hill, Public Schools, Flint, Michigan.

Types of Work Done by Special Advanced Classes—Katherine Otterbein, Public Schools, Detroit, Mich.

Children's Choice in Poetry—Helen Mackintosh, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa.

Remaking the Elementary School Course in English—Kate Kelley, Public Schools, Des Moines, Iowa.